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SKETCHES OF

RULERS OF INDIA

VOL. IV

THE PRINCES OF INDIA AND ALBUQUERQUE

ASOKA · BABAR · AKBAR · AURANGZIB · MADHAVA RAO SCINDIA · HAIDAR ALI AND TIPU SULTAN RANJIT SINGH · ALBUQUERQUE

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INTRODUCTION

Much misconception exists both as to the constitution of the Native States of India, and as to the extent of the area that they occupy in the vast Indian Empire of Great Britain. Sir John Strachey, in his valuable work, *India*, has thus written: 'The term Native States is apt to convey the idea that they are Indian nationalities existing in the midst of our great foreign dominion. This indeed is the popular English belief. It is assumed that in our conquest of India we imposed our rule on people that had previously been governed by princes of their own race: that we took the place of ancient Native dynasties which we destroyed, and that, having kept for ourselves the more valuable provinces, we have for one reason or another allowed some portions of India to retain their Native governments. No suppositions could be more contrary to fact. When, after the death of Aurangzib in 1707, the Mogul empire was breaking up, a scramble ensued for the fragments, and this lasted through the greater part of the eighteenth century. The chief competitors during the latter half of the struggle were the Mahrattas, the Muhammadan Powers of southern India, and the English. The larger share of the gain fell to the English, but our competitors had no better titles than our own. All alike were foreigners in the countries for which they were contending.' Similarly, Sir Alfred Lyall, in his *Asiatic Studies*, as quoted by Sir John Strachey, has written: 'One of the popular notions in England and Europe regarding the establishment of the English Empire in India is that our conquests absorbed nationalities, displaced long-seated dynasties, and levelled ancient nobilities. These are some of the self-accusations

by which the average home-keeping Englishman justifies to himself the indulgence of sitting down and casting dust on his head whenever he looks back upon the exploits of his countrymen in India, an attitude which is observed by foreigners with suspicion or impatience according to their insight into English character. Yet it would be easy to prove that one important reason why the English so rapidly conquered India was this, that the countries that fell into our hands had no nationalities, no long-seated ruling dynasties, or ancient aristocracies, that they had in fact no solid or permanent organization of any kind, but were politically treasure trove at the disposal of the first, who, having found, could keep. The best proof that in these countries the English destroyed no organized political institutions is the historical fact that in the countries which they annexed none such had been left for them to destroy. On the other hand, where indigenous political institutions of long standing still exist, it is the English who have saved them from destruction.'

These statements are supported by irrefragable proofs of their truth. Sir John Strachey proceeds to show that the principal Native States are roughly of two classes. The first comprises the States possessing the largest measure of independence, and the most important of these are the Muhammadan and the Mahratta States which survived the struggles of the eighteenth, and the beginning of the nineteenth, centuries. 'Their rulers,' says Sir John Strachey, 'are in all cases foreigners. None of these States are much older than our own dominion: the principal officials are usually as foreign as the chiefs: the armed forces usually consist of foreign mercenaries, and there is no closer sympathy between the people and their rulers than that which exists in the British Territories. The Haidarabad State, which is the chief surviving relic of Muhammadan supremacy in India, is the principal State of this class. The States of Gwalior, Indore, and Baroda are the principal survivals

of the Mahratta States. The most important of these is Gwalior. All these came into existence about the middle of the eighteenth century. Their chiefs are entirely foreign to the people. They are indeed, as Sir Lepel Griffin has shown, the representatives of the predatory hordes which, until crushed by British arms, turned the fertile plains of Central India into a wilderness. The Maharaja Scindia, for instance, the head of the Mahratta State of Gwalior, is the representative of the single family of a successful captain of armies, who annexed in the eighteenth century all the territory he could lay hands on, and whose son finally encamped so long in one place that his camp grew into his capital.' Baroda is the principal Native State of western India. Its ruler, who is styled the Gaikwar, claims the proud pre-eminence of precedence over all the Native chiefs of India, but his claim, it is needless to say, is not recognized by the other great chiefs, though in the number of guns he is entitled to, he ranks on an equal footing with the rulers of Haidarabad and Kashmir. Even the Bhonsla branch of the Mahratta houses, which has always been characterized by intense pride of race, refuses to concede it. The Bhonslas still, indeed, claim precedence over all the chiefs in the territories once subject to their sway, though it is a claim that they can no longer enforce. An amusing illustration of this came under the writer's own observation on one occasion. A reception was being given in western India by one of the leading chiefs of that region in honour of the present representative of the Bhonsla family, and of another prince of ancient dynasty from southern India, who claimed to be of Rajput descent. The Bhonsla claimed precedence, but the other chief could point to his family having had the dignity conferred upon them of a salute of nine guns, and as with the Government of India precedence is largely a matter of guns, the Bhonsla had to give up his claim.

The second of the classes into which Native States may

be divided is inferior to those of the first class, if judged only by their area, and population, and political importance, but, as Sir John Strachey observes: 'they are more numerous and more interesting. They are the only parts of India where ancient political institutions and ancient dynasties still survive, and their preservation is entirely due to the British Government. The principal States of this class are those of Rajputana, and there are many others in Central India, in Bandel-Khand, Baghel-Khand, and in the Bombay Presidency. The constitution of these States is very different from that of the Muhammadan and Mahratta States. In the latter the ruler, in theory at least, and subject to his responsibilities to the British Government, exercises absolute personal power. In States like those of Rajputana, whose ancient institutions have been preserved, the constitution of the governing authority is very different. The chief is the hereditary head of a military clan, the members of which have for centuries been lords of the soil. He and the minor chiefs and nobles are supposed to be descended from a common ancestor: he is "primus inter pares", and while all the branches of the original stock are ready to join their chief in time of danger, his actual power over them is, under ordinary circumstances, very greatly limited. Owing to the custom of adoption some of the ruling families in Rajputana go back to an unknown antiquity. In some, such as Udaipur, Jodhpur, and Jaipur, the families to which the present chiefs belong have ruled in the same territories for more than 1,000 years.' Sir Lepel Griffin has borne his testimony to the generally kindly and unselfish attitude towards the brotherhood and the people generally that prevails in these Rajput States. Of some of these Rajput chiefships and others in Central India, Sir David Barr has said, in picturesque language: 'Many of the smaller States of Central India are mingled in inextricable confusion with the larger States, and exemplify in the most striking manner the result of the sudden British

intervention in 1817, after years of invasion, conquest, and depredation by the Mahrattas and the Pindaris. It is as though a pack of hungry wolves, tearing a carcase to pieces, had been suddenly turned into stone, each holding the piece of meat or the bone in his possession at the moment of transformation.' Sir John Strachey also points out that in addition to the classes of States thus enumerated there are other States of a different character but having this in common with those of the second class, that they owe their present existence to the British Government. Chief among these is the State of Mysore. This was re-created by the Marquess Wellesley after the overthrow of the Muhammadan usurper, Tipu Sultan, and restored to the old Hindu reigning family; and though it had for a period to be taken again under British administration, it was finally rendered back to its Hindu rulers in 1881. Another of these States is Travancore. This was rescued from Tipu by the British and still remains in the possession of its Rajas. The State of Kashmir was created by the British in 1846, after the first Sikh war. The principal States of the Punjab also owe their continued existence to British protection: without it they would have been utterly swept away by Ranjit Singh. There are some thirty-six of these States with a population of nearly four millions. They have always been conspicuously loyal, and their administrations good, and, as Sir John Strachey has specially noted, 'In States of this kind there is often a strong feeling of attachment on the part of the people towards their chief.' The smaller chiefships to be found scattered about the Central Provinces and Bengal similarly owe either their actual creation or their preservation to the British Government.

As regards the area and extent of the Native States, a recognized authority, Sir David Barr, has said, 'When some people in England talk of the Indian Empire, they are apt to forget that Native States in the aggregate cover

680,000 square miles, or more than one-third of the whole of India, and about five times as large an area as that of the United Kingdom and Ireland, and contain a population of 66 millions out of a total of the 300 millions of India, or about 22 millions more than the population of the British Isles, and that although the States form an integral part of the Empire, and are dependent for their existence upon the protection of our Government on condition of loyalty to the Crown of England, and the faithful fulfilment of the treaties and engagements on which they are held, still within that area of 680,000 square miles, and over that population of 66 millions, the administration is conducted by Indian chiefs under their own laws and regulations. There are in all more than 600 Native States, and full sovereign rights are exercised only by those that have entered into alliance by treaty with the Government of India, the smaller States, and these of course form the majority, have not powers of life and death, and refer cases of heinous crime for trial in the courts of political officers. But in the administration of their internal affairs, the Government of India does not interfere in States great or small, save in cases of gross misgovernment, or during a period of the minority of a ruling chief. Nor does the Government exercise anything more than a political jurisdiction which extends to a general supervision and guidance.'

Sir David Barr, who has been mentioned above, read a paper on the subject of the Native States of India in the early part of 1908 at a meeting of the Royal Society of Arts. Lord Curzon, who presided on the occasion, introduced him to the meeting in these terms : ' Sir David Barr is at the present moment a member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India, and it will be known to all who have even the slightest acquaintance with India that there is no man better qualified to address the Society on the subject of the Native States of India than the distinguished author. From the time that he entered the service

of the Government of India, the whole of his service has been spent in connexion with Native States, and there is scarcely one of the more important States of India, including Rajputana and Central India, and Kashmir, in which he did not leave his mark for good on the administration of the State in the esteem of the rulers and in the affection of the people.' The full title of Sir David Barr's paper is *The Progress of the Native States of India during the last forty years.* In the sketches given of Native Rulers of India in the succeeding pages will be found much of the older history of the Native States. In this Introduction the writer proposes to deal solely with the modern conditions prevailing therein; only so much of the past history of some of the more representative States being given as will help to illustrate the difference between the present and the past. In doing so the writer proposes to avail himself to the full of the courteous permission accorded to him by Sir David Barr to make use of his paper. No presentation of the Native Rulers of India would be complete without some such picture of the present condition of things prevailing in the Native States as depicted by one who has the authority derived from an intimate and sympathetic acquaintance with the manners and life of the rulers and the ruled of those States, which has extended over more than an ordinary lifetime of public service in India.

Of the many problems that from time to time confront the Government in its relations with the Native States, one of the greatest is perhaps the question as to how far that general supervision and guidance which it is the chief function of government to exercise should extend, and in this connexion Sir David Barr has well said: 'The success or failure of our dealings with Native States depends entirely upon a correct appreciation of the extent to which we should supervise, and the manner in which we should guide, the actions of the rulers. In the multiplicity of States, and the diversity of their size and importance, as well as

their financial condition, their geographical position, their obligations to our Government, their past history and present status, and, in no less degree, the obligations of our Government to them, there is an immense scope for the exercise of wisdom, tact, and prudence. We have to avoid the Scylla of *laisser faire* and the Charybdis of undue interference, and to steer the middle course, which an ancient maxim lays down as the safest in all the affairs of this life.'

In a country where personal influence goes for so much the whole question practically revolves round the personality of the political officer, who is the man deputed by Government to look after the interests of the States, and who therefore comes into the very closest contact with both the rulers and the ruled of those States. Lord Curzon, himself one of the greatest chiefs among politicals, has thus described the functions of this important official. 'He had in the first place to make friends with, and to acquire the confidence of, the chief, he must exhibit a warm sympathy with the etiquette and spirit of the Native Darbar, he must understand and make allowances for the environment of the chief and the circumstances in which he had been brought up. At the same time while he did that he had to remember that he was the representative of the Imperial Government, and that it was his duty as such to exercise a check, where check was required, upon extravagance, maladministration, or misrule. He might, therefore, at any moment have to appear as the intimate friend of the chief, and at the next moment as his monitor and mentor. With a wise and tactful political officer there was no limit to the amount of influence he might exercise in the State; if he was harsh or overbearing there was equally no limit to the amount of harm he was capable of doing.' The work of political officers, especially those who have been connected with the more important Native States, has as a general rule been characterized by the

greatest tact, capacity, and enthusiasm; and Lord Curzon has given his testimony to this fact in no halting terms. He has said, 'Any student of Indian affairs for the last quarter of a century would admit that as the result of a succession of capable political officers, criticisms directed against the action and interference of political officers were much less heard of now than was formerly the case. The services which political officers had rendered to Native States in a period of minority should also never be forgotten. Some of the States which are now most flourishing would never have been in that position had it not been for the longer or shorter period during which they had been under the guidance of men like Sir David Barr and his distinguished peers. He would go further and say that if a proposal were made to abolish political officers in Native States to-morrow, the first protest would come from, or, at any rate, the loss would be first and most immediately felt by the chiefs themselves; they would realize in the majority of cases that they had been deprived of their wisest advisers and friends, that they had lost a means of communication with the central Government by means of which they were always kept in touch with Calcutta or Simla, while the people of the States would also bitterly regret the disappearance of what was often to them a guarantee for good government and economical administration.'

The responsibilities of the political officers being what they are, it is therefore a matter of supreme importance that a right choice should be made of the man who is to exercise these functions. It is a question whether this can be always so under what may be called the dual system of control that now prevails, under which, while the supreme Government exercises direct control over the more important and larger States, the smaller States, which form the great majority, come under the control of the provincial governments. It is a question whether it would not be a wise departure for the supreme Government to bring all

the Native States, great and small, into direct connexion with itself. One of the speakers at the meeting before which Sir David Barr read what has been well described as his lucid and illuminating paper, was Mr. F. D. Rees, who is a recognized authority on the subject of some of the more important of those States, that thus come under the direct control of the provincial governments. Mr. Rees said : ' While the great Native States received their British Residents from a service specially recruited for the purpose, the other States were a sort of a prize for the ordinary officer in the ordinary line of business, whose one idea was to make the government of the State similar to that which he administered as head of a department. If that was the case with the Resident, how much more so was it the case when the rulers of the States were advised not to appoint as their ministers gentlemen of their State who naturally would be recommended by the ruling chief if his initiative were wholly respected, but somebody from outside who, during the whole of the time he was administering the State, kept his eye on the neighbouring British Government in the hope of subsequent promotion after he returned. He submitted that it would be worth the while of the Government of India to reconsider the position in regard to these States for the purpose of ascertaining whether any of them should not be taken away from the provincial governments, which regarded the Residentships as mere prizes for seniority, and thus confer on them the advantage of being assisted by a political officer who was comparative in his knowledge, and had no object in destroying the individuality of the State.'

Under such a change as that shadowed forth by Mr. Rees, which might be made to cover not only the more important of those States that come under the control of the provincial governments, but all States, large or small, not the least of the advantages to be secured would be the maintenance of that continuity of service and of policy that

it is so important as a general rule to have maintained in an Eastern country. Owing to the exigencies of a public service that is continually demanding the transfer of men from the regular line to the political line, and vice versa, provincial governments are not always in a position to maintain this continuity. Whereas the supreme Government, if it became necessary to transfer a man who had shown that he possessed just the qualities required of one placed in the delicate position of a political officer, would be able to secure a man of similar character from the ranks of its specially trained service, and a man possessing that important qualification referred to by Mr. Rees, as comparative knowledge. Doubtless under the present system there are many men appointed from the regular line well fitted for these posts by their character and qualities, and many a man has succeeded admirably, but the provincial governments cannot always ensure that this shall be so, necessarily owing to a more limited supply of specially trained officers. Men coming from the regular line will vary much in their temperament, and not a few will possess the defects of their virtues. Those very qualities that may make a man a successful administrator in a British District may not be such as would convert him into a successful guide, philosopher, and friend such as a political officer is required to be when brought into close relationship with the rulers and ruled of a Native State. A position that demands an attitude of what may not inaptly be termed a watchful immobility does not sit lightly on a man who has been the life and soul of his District in British territory, and yet if he is to be a successful political officer, he must often be content to possess his soul in patience. Then again, 'the schoolmaster abroad' is not an unknown individual among the ranks of the civilian officers who may be entrusted with such a charge; and, needless to say, he is the last man who would be a *persona grata* to a ruling chief. Colonel Yate, who was at one time Chief Commissioner of

Biluchistan, is not far wrong when he suggests that the man most likely to prove a successful political officer is the military civilian. He has said : ' I can well understand the preference shown in former days by Native chiefs for military political officers rather than civilian.' It might be said that Colonel Yate, as a military man, would naturally give his opinion in favour of such a preference; but when it is remembered that some of the greatest of such officers have been military men, to mention only such names as Sir James Outram and Sir Henry Lawrence, it will be seen that there is a good deal to be said in favour of Colonel Yate's view.

The question of the internal administration of the Native States is inextricably bound up with this question of the personnel of the officers who are deputed with the delicate task of assisting Native rulers in their duties and responsibilities of government. One reason, and a very sound one too, that Colonel Yate has given for his preference for a military political over a civilian is that the latter official, who has administered a British District of his own, on being posted to a Native State as political officer, is naturally tempted to interfere when he sees things going differently from the way in which he was taught to see them go. He has well said in this connexion : ' The political officers who remember the feudal system of government in Native States in our younger days, the hereditary system of service in the States that then prevailed, and the old hereditary officials, do not wish to see these latter ousted by outsiders from other Provinces, and we certainly do not wish to see the introduction of sharp pleaders, and others learned in the law, from British Districts, or the general introduction of a British system of administration.' Colonel Yate makes the excellent suggestion that where native chiefs are desirous of improving the administration of their States they should be encouraged to depute their own native officials, bona fide natives of their own particular State,

to learn the British system in a British Province, and then to apply that system in their own method, rather than that they should import officers from British Districts to apply it for them. And he adds : 'The direct personal rule of the chiefs is in accordance with the traditions of Native States, and with the principles enjoined by the religion of both Hindu and Muhammadan alike. Let, therefore, as little interference as possible with the personal rule of the chief, and the grant to him at the earliest suitable moment of the fullest possible powers, be the leading maxims of political officers in their relations with Native States throughout the length and breadth of India.' Many are the problems, indeed, that come up in the relations of the Government with the Native States, and it would be well if those who had to deal with them were always men who could think imperially, and the Imperial Government has one advantage over provincial governments in this respect that it is in a better position to command such men.

Sir David Barr has shown that in the earlier relations between the British Government and the Native States of India there was a want of fixity of purpose and of continuity of policy. He has taken the assumption of the Empire of India by the Crown as the great landmark which separates off the older and the newer policy. In 1861 Lord Canning wrote : 'The Crown of England now stands forth the unquestioned Ruler and paramount Power in all India, and is for the first time brought face to face with its feudatories. There is a reality in the suzerainty of the Sovereign of England which has never existed before, and which is not only felt but eagerly acknowledged by the chiefs.' Ever since that time, as Sir David Barr has shown, the great chiefs of India have evinced a desire to enter more largely into the Federation of the Empire. What Sir David Barr has said of the special conditions prevailing in Rajputana may be found in many a State throughout the length and breadth of India, and indeed

also in some of the greater Zamindaris, and his remarks may well be quoted here: 'The traditions of Rajputana, which may be called the home of the great chiefs of India, as distinct from the principalities which have been created from Muhammadan, Mahratta, and Sikh conquests, point to a feudal system established for many centuries which has been retained to this day with undiminished force. A Rajput chief is not only the ruler of his State: he is also the head of the family to which his feudatories and all members of his clan, high or low, whether they be princes of the blood, or peasants of the soil, belong. Times have changed and are changing year by year, but many, indeed most of the principles, customs, and manners of the ancient Rajput clans, are maintained to this day, and are clung to by chiefs and people with a tenacity which is the strongest evidence of their pride of ancestry, and their glory in the achievements of their forefathers. The government of Native States has always been autocratic. The ruler's word is law and from time immemorial the people have been accustomed to regard their chief as something very little less than a deity: and so strong, so innate is their sense of loyalty that, as we have seen in more than one unhappy case, they have submitted without a murmur, and for many years, to cruelty, tyranny, and oppression, during periods of the chaotic misrule of a misguided, or even insane, chief. But, as it is said in India, "the subjects make the State," and in every chiefship the main principle has been to follow the lead of the ruler. The natural tendency to retain the old established feudal system has permeated all Rajput chiefs, and it is therefore not surprising, that after the establishment of the suzerainty of the British Crown in India, they should regard the Sovereign of England as their feudal lord. It is this sentiment that has tended so much to weld the States of India into the Empire of England.'

There have been various steps in the growth of this sentiment. Sir David Barr has again said: 'The first

stimulus to the growing feeling of a desire to enter into closer relations with the Empire was given to the chiefs of India at the Imperial assemblage held by the late Lord Lytton as Viceroy of India in 1877. Then, as one of the most distinguished political officers wrote at the time, "chiefs who had not met on any previous occasion, and whose ancestors had met only on the field of battle, were brought together to realize the importance of their position as pillars of the State." The pageant of 1877 was repeated on a far grander and more important scale in the Darbar at Delhi, held on the 1st of January, 1903, by Lord Curzon, when the coronation of King Edward VII, Emperor of India, was celebrated with all pomp and ceremony before that vast assemblage of chiefs of India, and the representatives of all sections of the Indian Empire.' Yet another step, as Lord Curzon has pointed out, was the institution of the Imperial Service Troops by Lord Dufferin and Lord Lansdowne in 1888, and 1889. With the employment of these troops in the field, both in Somaliland and in China, Lord Curzon has said, 'for the first time the salient fact was recognized that the princes of India were equally concerned with the Parliament of Great Britain in the military defence of the Empire.' The institution of Chiefs' Colleges, and of the Imperial Cadet Corps, were also, as Lord Curzon has shown, additional landmarks, binding together the princes of India into a closer political union with the British Government, and testifying to the solidarity of their interests with those of the paramount Power. The writer had personal experience of the excellent effect that this meeting on equal terms, at the great assemblage at Delhi under practically the shadow of the throne, of some of the lesser chiefs with the greater and more important chiefs, did have on their attitude towards the supreme Government generally. They began to feel for the first time in their history that they held an important place in the Empire, and that their interests were bound up with

those of the paramount Power. Very great importance—some would indeed say an undue importance—is attached by the chiefs and nobles of India to their prestige and old family traditions. One of the most prominent objects to be seen in their palaces is the family pedigree tree engrossed in illuminated lettering and magnificently framed. Anything that encourages this sentiment, which after all does undoubtedly make for self-respect, is to be encouraged. A great many of the chiefs returned from the historic assemblage at Delhi with a sense of their importance and prestige increased: and their subjects, who follow naturally the lead of their chiefs, felt themselves bound by the old ties of feudality and loyalty, through them, to the paramount Power.

This subject of feudality is an asset, not altogether without its value, in furthering the peace of the Empire. A Muhammadan writer of some considerable experience in the domain of law, but not necessarily intimately acquainted with the internal affairs of the Native States, has, in the pages of a leading London Review, given expression to his opinion that there is a distinct growth of the democratic sentiment in many of the Native States of India. This has not been the experience of those best qualified to judge from an intimate acquaintance with these States, nor has it been the experience of the writer of these pages. He once had the privilege of a winter's tour with the Zamindar in one of the greater Zamindaris of Bengal, the rulers of which, in the estimation of their subjects, rank with the chiefs of the larger States: and nothing struck him more than the manner in which the slightest wish of the Zamindar was treated as law. His experience, too, of many of the States has been much the same. Still there is an element of truth in the remark so far as it relates to some States, but mainly in those which have been subjected to the peaceful penetration of the ubiquitous, and almost all-pervading, Bengali, or the power-loving

Mahratta : but even in these States autocracy still is a power in the land and, on the whole, it is exercised in a not unkindly way. In one direction at any rate—a not altogether unimportant matter in these days of agitation in India—it is exercised in a way that makes for the peace of the Empire. Sir David Barr has well said : 'And here it is that the advantages of autocratic rule assert themselves : he would be a bold man who would prosecute an agitation in any of the States of India, or would venture in the capital of any State to criticize, far less to malign and traduce, the actions or the intentions of the ruling chief.'

There has been much to seek in the past in the internal government of the Native States, and there is still much to seek in the present : but that there has been enormous progress within recent years, no competent authority will be prepared to deny. This progress has been most marked during the last forty years. Of the period that immediately followed the new declaration of policy enunciated by Lord Canning, and already referred to, Sir David Barr has said : 'During the ten years, 1858–68, there was a certain amount of progress and improvement, but it was relatively slight, and it was a common observation in those days that Native States were a hundred years behind the rest of India.' Even so late as 1868, Sir Henry Daly, who was Governor-General's Agent at the time in Central India, could write : 'Colonel Sutherland, resident at Gwalior in 1837, described Isagarh, Bhilsa, and Malwa as desolate and miserable. Thirty years have brought no change for the better. Travellers still go armed to the teeth, and in many cases the man at the plough has a sword by his side. Traders going from village to village are not safe without an armed escort. To men accustomed to Districts under British rule such a statement must seem fabulous. It is necessary to live and move in Native States to know the nature of the system under which they exist.' This one illustration of a state of things that it may be hoped has gone for ever

must suffice. It will be a more pleasing task to turn to the consideration of the real and substantial progress that has been made since this was written. This progress may be noted under the several heads of railway construction, irrigation, general administration, and arrangements for combating famine conditions and alleviating distress. The States which may be taken as representative of their class are the States of Rajputana and Central India, and the larger and more important States of Haidarabad, Mysore, and Kashmir.

Treating the subject generally, the introduction of railways perhaps has been one of the principal factors making for progress all round. There are now nearly 3,000 miles of railways in the States of Rajputana and Central India, where in 1868 there were none. Sir David Barr tells an amusing story of Sir Henry Daly in connexion with the first introduction of railways: In 1870, Sir Henry Daly, in a report to the Government of India, wrote: 'The railway will bring light in its train.' One of his assistants ventured to draw his attention to the sentence, and suggested that it savoured of a joke. Sir Henry replied 'No joke, Sir, let it stand'. And Sir David Barr well says: 'I think the verdict of thirty-eight years establishes the truth of his prediction, for the railway has indeed brought light into many dark places, and has practically changed not only the face of the country, but the character of the people, and the attitude of the ruling chiefs.' Irrigation is a matter that has also been receiving much attention from the chiefs. The old system of irrigation in many of the States of Central India is still from wells: and all that can be done is an increase in the number of these: but as this system is a very effective one in its way, though involving more labour and a greater number of workers than canal irrigation, a great amount of public good is effected even in this way. Other States have been able to afford more elaborate systems, and much benefit has accrued

to agriculture on which the prosperity of the States so largely depends. Anyhow, this attention to irrigation for the benefit of agriculture, marks a very great advance on the old idea which saw in irrigation only a means of increasing the fruitfulness of the chief's own pleasure gardens, or as a means of beautifying his capital.

In the matter of general administration most of the States show great improvement in every direction. Thus Sir David Barr has said : 'A complete change has come over the administration of all the States of Rajputana and Central India. In nearly every large State the old plan of farming land revenue has given place to the organized system of survey and settlement. The administration of justice has also greatly improved. Nearly every State has abandoned the old system, which was described as a determination to make a profit out of crime rather than an honest desire to inflict a really deterrent punishment, and has adopted laws based on the codes of British India. Transit dues, which used to form a large item in the receipts, have been everywhere abolished to the great benefit of trade. The police has been reorganized, and successful efforts have been made to suppress dakaiti, or highway robbery, and violent crime. Jails have been modernized, and are no longer subject to the reproach of being "filthy places, without light or air, where convicts and prisoners under trial were indiscriminately chained together".' Though only, on an average, four per cent. of the youth of the States of the school-going age attend schools, this shows at least some progress since 1868, when education, except in one or two enlightened States, such as Jaipur, was practically non-existent. A great advance has been noted in the humane department of medicine. Whereas in 1872, the number of hospitals and dispensaries in Rajputana was only sixty-three, it is now 178, and similar progress in this direction is visible in other States. The introduction of a system of Budgets of Income and Expenditure has

enabled the great majority of the States to put their finances on a sound basis, and there is hardly a State of any importance now where the resources have not largely increased. Indeed, Sir David Barr states that the revenues of Rajputana and Central India have expanded by more than sixty per cent., and this in spite of the expenses incurred in the relief of famine, the construction of railways, irrigation works, roads, and buildings, and the maintenance of an improved administration.

Sir David Barr has well said : ‘ Famine administration is perhaps the greatest test that can be applied to the administrative capacity of a Native State.’ He has drawn a picture of the state of things that existed before the chiefs began to realize their responsibilities in this direction, which was not so very far back. Speaking of the very great famine that prevailed in Central India during the years 1868–70, he has said : ‘ Both in Rajputana, and in Central India, the Darbars utterly failed to grasp the situation or to afford relief to the starving population.’ Perhaps the most instructive account of the actual state of things that prevailed is that quoted by him from a report by Colonel Brooke, who was at the time Political Agent in Marwar, that district in which a proverb runs, ‘ Expect one lean year in three, one famine in eight.’ ‘ For the alleviation of distress in Marwar no public works were undertaken by the Maharaja, nor was any assistance given either to the poor of the city or to ryots in the villages. The hakims and revenue officers squeezed the last penny from them, and when the great emigration took place, the customs agent at the Dasuri Pass before letting them through, not only forced from them the cesses due for the year, but also a cattle-tax for each head of kine taken out of the country, though the departure was forced by the drought. It is but justice to say that this mode of getting money was reprobated throughout Marwar.’ The two most recent famines have been those that occurred in 1896–7,

and 1899–1900, and on these occasions Sir David Barr has noted that in comparison with the record of all previous famines the relief given by the Darbars was a remarkable and praiseworthy effort. He has said, 'In both famines, and in all parts of Rajputana and Central India, private charity was largely extended by chiefs and people. Liberality and munificence were shown even in the zananas of princely houses, and we must not forget the noble example set by the wife of that gallant soldier, Maharaja Sir Pertab Singh, then the first noble of Jaipur, and now the ruling chief of Idar, who not only established an orphanage, but remained there herself to administer her great charity.'

At the same time, Sir David Barr has been careful to add: 'I do not for a moment claim that the famine administration of these Native States was to be compared with the organized relief in British India. I know full well, and from personal experience, of both famines in Central India that no such comparison can be made. I know that some chiefs failed in their duty, that in some States relief was not properly organized, or that it was organized too late to be effective, that thousands of persons died from starvation, and many thousands fled from the States before they knew of the relief that was available, or because they did not believe that any relief would be afforded, and joined famine works in British Districts where they were assured of succour.' But it must be remembered in this connexion that even in British territory the organization of relief in the earlier of the two great famines referred to, that of 1896–7, was marked, especially in its earlier stages, by many mistakes, due mainly, it must be said, to lack of experience in dealing with the conditions that arose, and possibly too to want of a definite policy. Almost the first intimation that British officials received of the serious state of things existing in the country districts was the daily immigration that took place from the interior into the head-quarter towns of distressed families of agricul-

turists at a season when, under normal conditions, the harvest was about to be gathered in. The distress was met promptly, it is true; the measures for meeting it took the primitive form of relief kitchens, one of the original inventors of which system is recorded to have been the Emperor Aurangzib. These kitchens were at first entrusted to the management of municipal authorities, and private charity was invited and liberally responded to by the inhabitants of the towns, the Marwari merchants contributing large quantities of grain. Government eventually took these over, and they were liberally organized. But in their earlier stages, as the writer knows from his own bitter experience, many mistakes were made, not only as to the nature and quality of the food best suited for the more emaciated of the famine-stricken, but also as to the quantity best calculated to sustain life. If this was so in British Districts, it is not surprising that there was a lack of organization of relief in Native States, due to very much the same reason, want of experience in dealing with famine conditions. Nor is it surprising also that some of the methods of relief should have been primitive in the extreme : and that any grain that came to hand irrespective of its digestibility by the weak stomachs of the sufferers should have been utilized. Some of the chiefs, moreover, thought that they saw in the stoppage of the export of grain from their territories a means of combating famine conditions : in this, indeed, they were not singular ; they have their apologists even among European publicists. But Government has always attached much importance in time of famine to the prevention of any dislocation of trade such as a prohibition of export might bring about ; and rightly so, for it would mean the practical disappearance of that somewhat usurious but most useful individual, the petty grain merchant, or bunniah, as he is generally styled. In times of stress the services of this man are almost indispensable ; he is the chief agent through whom supplies

may be got into districts suffering from scarcity; and with his disappearance all possibility of getting food to the famine-stricken would, in the great majority of cases, have disappeared also. The scrupulous honesty of this class where public interests have been specially committed to their charge, and the marvellous efficiency of their machinery, have to be known to be appreciated. There is some justification therefore for a policy that has for its object the prevention of any undue interference with the natural laws of supply and demand. The conclusions that were come to by the Famine Commission of 1898 resulted in the elaboration of a Code of Famine Relief that is second to none in the world for its efficiency and humanity. The vastly superior organization of relief that was so conspicuous in both British territory and in Native States during the progress of the later famine of 1899–1900, may be largely attributed to the labours of this Commission.

The long programme of reforms laid down by the Government of India in 1869, too long to quote here, that required to be carried out in the important State of Haidarabad, may be taken as the measure of the deficiencies in the administration at that period. The man who was entrusted with the task of carrying them out has thus been described by Sir David Barr:—'Haidarabad was fortunate in possessing a minister capable of carrying out such wide and far-reaching reforms. Sir Salar Jung was a man of remarkable ability, who, for many years, had held the post of minister under the last Nizam, and being himself one of the nobles of the State, was thoroughly acquainted with the wants of the country, and with the defects of the administration. With the sympathetic support of the Government of India he applied himself to the task before him, and succeeded during the Nizam's minority of fifteen years in accomplishing most, if not all, of the required measures of reform.' Of the present ruler of Haidarabad Sir David Barr has said: 'The Nizam is by far the shrewdest

man in the State, thoroughly alive to the responsibilities of his great position; and one whose word is to be relied on.' No higher praise could be given to any man than this. Of Mysore and its ruler, Sir David Barr has said: 'Mysore may be acknowledged to be the model Native State of India. It had all the advantage of fifty years of British administration, but the Darbar deserves the credit of maintaining the standard of government then introduced, and of carrying out many measures of progress, such as the development of mineral resources, the expansion of railways, and the promotion of industries and trade. The present Maharaja is a young chief of charming personality: he has received an excellent education, and since his accession to power has given proofs of his desire to rule his State with prudence, and for the benefit of his subjects.' To Mysore's great Diwan, Sir K. Sheshadri Iyer, who died in 1902, has been due very largely the great progress achieved by this State. Kashmir owes a similar debt to Sir Walter Lawrence. Sir David Barr has said: 'The story of the progress of Kashmir has been recorded in a most fascinating and interesting work called *The Valley of Kashmir*. This book is a classic and its greatest value lies in the fact that it was written by Sir Walter Lawrence, who, as settlement officer, initiated, and personally carried out, those reforms in the methods of assessing and collecting revenue, which were so sorely needed. He not only succeeded in assuring to the State a gradual expansion of its revenues, but he freed the country from a system of forced labour (corvée), and the exactions of a corrupt and tyrannical method of collecting revenue, which for many years had been the chief blot in the administration of this beautiful country. He has earned the gratitude of the State: and of the agriculturists, whose condition has changed from one of grinding oppression, to contentment and prosperity.' A nobler record than this few men would require. Sir David Barr has shown that in many

other States, such as Baroda, Cutch, Kolhapur, the principalities of Kathiawar, the Punjab States, and in Cochin and Travancore, there has been equal, if not indeed, in some, even greater progress made during the past forty years. The same may be said of some of the chiefships in the Central Provinces and Bengal. The State of Bamra, now one of the States lying within the confines of Bengal, was, under its late ruler, a model State.

In estimating some of the causes that have resulted in this marked progress, Sir David Barr has said: 'If we look for the forces which have been brought into action, I think we may take the following as the most powerful. In the first place, I would put the example set by British rule. It is impossible to conceive that Native States would continue for all time in a condition of stagnation, while the Government of India was prosecuting a vigorous programme of expansion and improvement in all directions around them, and it is undoubtedly the fact that the chiefs have been roused by the example set before them. Next I would place the extension of communications by rail and road, and the manner in which Native States, so long isolated, have been brought into communion with the rest of India. Then we must remember that during the period under review, a considerable number of States have for various reasons been placed under the direct management or supervision of British officers, and the higher standard of administrative efficiency thus brought about has been maintained, more or less, by the chiefs when they assumed power. Another powerful motive towards progress has been the education of the chiefs themselves. There is now an entirely new generation. The Nizam of Haidarabad, the Maharajas of Mysore, Baroda, Gwalior, and Rewa, have been specially trained by private tutors and guardians during their minority. A large number of other chiefs have been educated at the Chiefs' Colleges. Among the incentives to improvement may be reckoned the encouragement and

assistance consistently given by the Government of India to every State that evinced the slightest tendency towards establishing an improved administration. This assistance has been manifested by large advances of funds, by placing at the disposal of the chiefs the best officers available as experts to carry out survey, settlement, and assessment, irrigation, public works, the conservancy of forests, and the establishment of a sound system of finance. Lastly, I would note the immense power exercised over the minds of chiefs by the interest in their welfare taken by the Royal Family of England. Their loyalty has been thus evoked, and they have been stimulated to prove themselves worthy members of the Empire of India.'

Lord Curzon has given, as one of the factors in the forward and upward movement in the standards of administration that is now so marked a feature in so many of the States, the personality and character of the chiefs themselves. He has said : 'At the present moment, amongst the leading chiefs of India there were a number of men of the highest character, and of remarkable ability, who in any country, and at any time of history, would have been fitted to be rulers, and worthy to be regarded as considerable rulers of the States over which they presided.' That this is so is undoubtedly due to the attention that has been paid to the question of their education. Some have been educated by individual guardians and tutors, specially selected, others have received their education in the Chiefs' Colleges. These colleges have done admirable work in the past, and under the living inspiration of Lord Curzon himself, are doing still more admirable work in the present. It is a common subject of remark among those most competent to judge that the young chiefs now being educated at these colleges present a marked contrast to those who have been left in the retirement of their own homes. This is especially noticeable in their bearing and their manners : their bearing has nothing of the slouch about it : on the

contrary they carry themselves as men: similarly their manners are pre-eminently those of gentlemen. The change has the approval, not only of Englishmen, but of their own countrymen, even of the most orthodox among them. The writer will never forget the remark made to him some years ago by the premier pandit of Bengal on the occasion of a visit he paid him in the company of one of his pupils, a young Indian prince, and himself a Brahman of the Brahmans in orthodoxy. 'Sir,' he said, 'let me congratulate you; you have succeeded in creating an Indian gentleman.' The writer considers this remark the highest compliment that his educational work among Indian princes ever received.

Two important conferences were convened by Lord Curzon to discuss the subject of reforms in the Chiefs' Colleges, at which many of the chiefs interested were present. Amongst other reforms initiated was the placing of the curriculum to be pursued on a more practical basis, having in view the special requirements of the class for which the colleges were intended. It was then decided that the college course of instruction should not follow university lines, but should be a special one. The colleges now have their own final examination, a diploma for passing which is granted by the Government of India: this is recognized by the universities as equivalent to their testamur granted on passing the entrance examination, so that young chiefs who wish to do so may pass on to a degree at the university. It is unnecessary to dwell on the advantages of such a system, and the impetus it has given to education on right lines, and the scope, moreover, that it gives to the true educationalist interested in the all-round development of his charges. That this change has been welcomed by the chiefs, there is abundant evidence to show. The writer can give one concrete illustration from his own experience. A political chief from the wild regions of Chota Nagpur brought one day for admission into the college over whose

fortunes the writer has presided for fifteen years, five of his sons, and he particularly requested that the eldest of them should be trained as an administrator, as, said he, 'I intend that he shall be my Diwan.' If the writer were asked which of the special reforms thus inaugurated by Lord Curzon most commended themselves to the chiefs concerned, and indeed to all Indians interested in the development on right lines of the character of Indian youth, he would note the special stress laid on their instruction in their own vernaculars, and on their religious training. By the former they are kept in touch with the life of their own people, and have every inducement to devote themselves to their peoples' welfare, when they are called on to undertake the responsibilities and duties of their position. By the latter their character is strengthened and developed.

A Muhammadan gentleman who is well versed in Indian social problems, has said that the Chiefs' Colleges approach more nearly to the standing of the great Public Schools of England than do any other educational institutions in India: and he bases his deductions mainly upon the discipline therein prevailing: in the great majority of schools and colleges in India discipline can hardly be styled a prominent feature. That excellent discipline does prevail in the Chiefs' Colleges is a patent fact: and it is a feature much appreciated by the majority of the great houses, and though this may not be the case universally, it is a feeling that is steadily growing in intensity. The writer can vouch for this from his own experience. He once received an application from a chief for the admission into his college of his son; and the chief based his application on the ground that he had heard that the discipline in the Chiefs' Colleges stood out in such marked contrast to the want of it in other institutions. But there is another feature which has sometimes been overlooked, which causes the Chiefs' Colleges to approximate closely to the standard of English Public Schools, and that is the religious instruction that is

imparted in them. At the conferences referred to, the chiefs were unanimous on the subject of the importance of all boys attending the colleges being trained in the tenets of their respective religions. Lord Curzon gave every impetus to their united wishes. The chiefs were invited to draw up manuals of religious instruction: and religious instruction received a recognized place in the curriculum of all Chiefs' Colleges. The writer has had such a manual in use in his own college for some time. In this case the chief who had been entrusted with the task of drawing a manual up, died before his work was completed. The writer was then deputed by the chiefs concerned to superintend the completion of the work: this he did and entrusted it to the charge of two orthodox pandits, contenting himself with giving the general lines on which it was to be drawn up, and the best Sanskrit authorities it was to be based upon. The work took more than two years to complete. A member of the staff has been chosen, with special attention to his character and orthodoxy, to undertake the instruction, and an allotted hour is fixed. The young chiefs have taken great interest in the subject, and the results of the systematic teaching have been excellent both on their character and on their demeanour and bearing. They have acquired a greater sense of responsibility, and a greater respect for authority. Their manners now display that delightful old-world courtesy and deference, entirely wanting in any element of cringing or servility, that characterized their forbears, and which so many of their contemporaries, temporarily only it is hoped, seem to have lost. The subject of religious education in schools and colleges in India generally, especially in those under the control of Government, came up for discussion in the course of a recent debate on Indian affairs in the House of Commons: many of the speakers deplored its absence. It is for the people themselves to supply the deficiency in the same way that the chiefs have done for their own colleges: and there are

not wanting abundant signs that they are becoming fully alive to the necessity.

By his creation of the Imperial Cadet Corps, Lord Curzon showed that he fully realized the importance of giving this great class, the aristocracy of India, some incentives to avail themselves of the facilities afforded its members for education, by offering them some outlets for their ambition. He has well said : ' It must be remembered that the Native chief was a man of like character and ambitions with themselves, that he could not be left to rust in his palace with nothing whatever to do, and that one of the foremost duties of the British Government was to find a scope for his energies, his ardour, and his patriotism. Above all, British administrators must remember and the chiefs understand that the two were rowing in the same boat in India. The chiefs were rulers of one part of the country, the British were rulers of the remainder, but the two partners ought to act in observance of the same principles, and in absolute harmony and co-operation with each other. If those were the principles which they continued to observe in the future, as he believed they were observing them now, then he thought the Native States of India would not merely survive, but would grow even stronger from year to year, and he was certain that if any emergency ever arose in which this country might have to call on them and their rulers for aid, we might rely with the utmost confidence upon their loyalty and devotion.' The steps that the British Government is now taking to give increased dignity and influence to the princes and nobles of India, will receive the full approval of all who have any acquaintance with the difficulties that they have encountered in the past in finding careers for themselves and their sons, and of the strenuous attempts that so many of them are now making to remove these difficulties. The old type of chief may have been ' studiis rudis, sermone barbarus ', his education is now making him ' impetu strenuus, manu promptus, cogitatione

celer', and he deserves every encouragement that the Government can give him.

In the course of his paper Sir David Barr made a notable utterance, which proves what the writer has laid stress on in his sketches of some of the more distinguished among the Company's Governors, that, given the opportunity, the present administrators in India may be trusted to display the same sympathy with the peoples of India among whom their lot is cast, as any of their great predecessors displayed. He said: 'There is a peculiar charm in the land of the Rajas, and in the old-world courtesy which one meets, perhaps more especially in Rajputana, but to a great extent in all Native States; there is a freedom of thought and action, a sense of responsibility, a pleasure in being associated with the life, manners and customs of the rulers and the subjects of these principalities, which are at once engrossing and refreshing. Englishmen feel themselves at home with a race of independent, high-spirited people, whose ancient lineage and romantic, chivalrous past compel respect and admiration, and these feelings are accentuated by the friendly welcome, the genial kindness and hospitality, and the frank confidence extended to those who show their appreciation of these qualities. I have spent many months of many years travelling in camp through Malwa, Rajputana, and Baghel-khand, but I do not remember passing a single dull day, for I lived with the men of the country, and they told me all they knew of its history and traditions, the old forts and strongholds in their hills and forests illustrated their tales, and were, verily, 'sermons in stones.' I have seen the cities, the ancient palaces, the temples and mosques of nearly every State in Central India and Rajputana. I have taken part in every kind of State festival and pageant, and I have had my share of the excellent sport still to be obtained in their beautiful forests and jungles. I have watched, with the greatest interest and sympathy, the progress made, during my service, in the

Native States, to which I was accredited. I know what the difficulties have been, and how hard it is to break down old prejudices and customs, and to engraft in the minds of a very conservative people the advantages of western culture and the first principles of modern rule and administration. I am proud of the friendships I have made with many of the chiefs of India, Rajput, Mahratta, and Muhammadan. But the people of the soil, the patient, simple, hard-working peasants, they, in their millions, command, equally with their chiefs, our sympathy and respect. And when I remember how I have seen them in their prosperity, strong, healthy, cheerful folk, reaping rich crops, and herding fat cattle ; and then, at other times, in their distress, stricken with famine, mere skeletons literally gasping for life, but still patient and uncomplaining, I cannot but feel, as all must feel who have lived and worked in their midst, that anything we have done for their good, no matter how hard the task, nor how long it took to accomplish, brings its own reward.'

I have included, as a supplementary sketch in this, the fourth volume of the series, a sketch of the great Portuguese ruler, Albuquerque. There was much in common between the Portuguese and the people of India. They intermarried for one thing very largely as a matter of State policy, and a very large proportion of the so-called Eurasian class, which are so often credited with a British ancestry, are really of Portuguese origin. As related, moreover, in the sketch of Akbar, that ruler had a great admiration for the Portuguese, who were at the height of their glory and power while the Moguls were founding their empire in India. It is not altogether inappropriate, therefore, that a Portuguese Ruler of India should rank side by side with Native Rulers.

These sketches are based mainly on the Rulers of India series, edited by the late Sir W. W. Hunter, under the authority of the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, who have courteously accorded me their permission to make

use of them in the way I have. The authors of the particular volumes of this series to whom I am indebted are :—

Vincent A. Smith, M.R.A.S., author of *Asoka.*

Stanley Lane-Poole, Esq., M.A., Professor of Arabic, Trinity College, Dublin, author of *Babar*, and *Aurangzib.*

Colonel Malleson, C.S.I., author of *Akbar.*

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To Lord Curzon, late Viceroy of India, and Chancellor of the University of Oxford, whose enthusiasm shone with undimmed lustre throughout the seven long years of his Viceroyalty, a beacon to his generation, this volume, by his gracious permission, is dedicated.

G. D. OSWELL.

September.

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CHAPTER I

THE BUDDHIST EMPEROR OF INDIA

Asoka, 272 B.C.—232 B.C.

Sir W. W. Hunter has thus written :—' Among the Indian adventurers who thronged Alexander's camp in the Punjab, each with his plot for winning a kingdom or crushing a rival, Chandra Gupta, an exile from the Gangetic Valley, seems to have played a somewhat ignominious part. He tried to tempt the wearied Greeks on the banks of the Beas with schemes of conquest in the rich provinces of Hindustan to the south-east ; but having personally offended Alexander, he had to fly the camp. In the confused years that followed, he managed with the aid of plundering hordes, to found a kingdom in Magadha or Behar, on the ruins of the Nanda dynasty. He seized their capital Pataliputra, the modern Patna ; established himself firmly in the Gangetic Valley and compelled the north-western principalities, Greek garrisons and Indian princes alike, to acknowledge his suzerainty. While the Greek general, Seleucus, was winning his way to the Syrian monarchy during the eleven years that followed Alexander's death, Chandra Gupta was building up an empire in northern India. Seleucus reigned in Syria from 312 to 280 B.C., Chandra Gupta in the Gangetic Valley from 316 to 292 B.C. In 312 B.C. these two monarchs advanced their kingdom to each other's frontier ; they had to decide whether they were to live in peace or at war. Seleucus in the end sold the Greek conquests in the Kabul Valley and the Punjab to Chandra Gupta, and gave his daughter in marriage to the Indian king. He also stationed a Greek ambassador at the court of Chandra Gupta from 306 B.C. to 298 B.C.' Seleucus is also recorded to have made a treaty with the Indian king fully recognizing his title as Emperor of India. The ambassador who was thus accredited to Chandra Gupta's court was the famous Greek

historian Megasthenes, to whom the world is indebted for a picturesque description of India, and its peoples. Sir W. W. Hunter has said :—' The Greek ambassador observed with admiration the absence of slavery in India, the chastity of the women and the courage of the men. In valour, he says, they excelled all other Asiatics ; they required no locks to their doors ; above all, no Indian was ever known to tell a lie. Sober and industrious, good farmers, and skilful artisans, they scarcely ever had recourse to a lawsuit and lived peaceably under their native chiefs.' There is no further record of any very interesting personality from among the countrymen of Megasthenes having visited India till very recent times. One of the speakers at the Congress of Religions recently held at Oxford was Dr. Gennadius, who, it is recorded, spoke in fluent English. He made this interesting statement :—' Demetrius Galanos, commonly known as the Greek Brahman, was born in 1760, and early gave signs of being possessed of a critical literary mind. By the age of fourteen he had learnt all that Athens could then teach him, and went to Patmos to complete his education. He then became a teacher of Greek in Constantinople, and from there was sent to Calcutta in 1786, where he learnt English, Sanskrit, Persian, and Hindu dialects. After six years' teaching in Calcutta he retired to Benares and adopted the dress of a Brahman, living there for the remaining forty years of his life, though while devoting himself to study he did not live a life of extreme monastic severity, and when he died in 1833 he left behind him a unique collection of translations of Indian philosophical works.' Galanos is not the only European who, suffering from philosophic doubt, found his consolation in that unique system, which, known as Brahmanism, is perhaps the most eclectic of all the philosophical religious systems known to the world in its readiness to absorb within itself all that it finds of good in other systems. The writer was once shown in that region wherein stands one of Asoka's most perfect columns, a low brick structure with the usual cavity for a lamp in it, and was informed that it was a memorial erected in the past by the peasants of the neighbourhood who could afford no other, to the memory

of a revered European who had adopted the tenets of Brahmanism. Chandra Gupta was succeeded by his son, Bindusara, whose cognomen was Amitraghata, a Sanskrit term meaning 'the slayer of those who are not my friends', which may or may not mean that a certain amount of letting of blood was necessary amongst his kinsfolk, before he was allowed to succeed to his father's throne. Bindusara was succeeded by his son Asoka, the subject of this sketch, who appears to have come to the throne in 272 B.C., though his coronation did not take place till 269 B.C., from which date the years of his reign are generally reckoned.

The empire which Asoka inherited was an extensive one, extending from sea to sea. It included the countries now known as Afghanistan, Kashmir, and Nipal, besides practically the whole of India, except the southern peninsula. Asoka himself indeed added to this vast empire by the conquest of the region along the east coast, from the Mahanadi river on the north to Pulicat not far short of the modern Madras on the south. This territory was known as Kalinga, and sometimes as the three Kalingas. This conquest was made in the ninth year of his reign; there is no record extant of the early part of his reign. This appears to have been the only great military achievement of the reign; from this time forward, indeed, Asoka appears to have eschewed military glory and to have devoted himself to the problems of internal administration. It is commonly believed that his chief reason for forgoing the glory of further conquests was an extraordinary change that came over his mind about this time. He seems to have fallen under the influence of the teachings of the great Buddha, as expounded to him by some persuasive preacher. In his interesting account of early Buddhism, Professor Rhys Davids has shown how, in the districts of India where Buddhism first arose, which comprise what is now known as the United Provinces, the people, while they still resorted to the Brahmans in matters of astrology and kindred subjects, listened rather to a class known as the wanderers in matters of ethics, religion, and philosophy. Of the wanderers he has said: 'These were wandering teachers, celibates, but not necessarily ascetics, who resembled in many respects the Greek sophists. Like

them they differed much in intelligence, earnestness, and honesty. Some are described as "Eel-wrigglers", "Hair-splitters"; and this not without reason, if one may judge fairly from the specimens of their arguments as reported by their adversaries. But there must have been many of a very different character, or the high reputation they enjoyed among all classes of the people would scarcely have been maintained. They held no formal meetings, and made no set speeches, but they used to call on the cultured people in the settlements they visited, and welcomed in their own lodging-places any one willing to talk of higher matters. So large was the number of such people that the town communities, the clans, and the rajas vied one with another to provide the wanderers with pavilions, meeting-halls and resting-places where such conversations or discussions could take place.' Asoka, doubtless, fell under the influence of one of these wandering teachers, and seems to have had his conscience awakened to the sufferings caused by war. From this time dates that event known as 'The conversion of King Asoka to Buddhism', an event which led to a celebrated edict being recorded on the rocks with the title 'True Conquest'. This edict, which describes the sufferings of the vanquished and the remorse of the conqueror, and which has been described as instinct with personal feeling, thus concludes: 'His Majesty desires for all animate beings security, control over the passions, peace of mind and joyousness; this is the chiefest conquest in His Majesty's opinion—the conquest by the Law of Piety.' Asoka joined the Buddhist community as a lay disciple only a short time after the conquest of Kalinga, in 261 B.C., and ordered his designation henceforth to be Piyadasi, the Humane.

Naturally, there are not wanting legends on the subject of the conversion of Asoka, and, though they are not authentic, they are of interest mainly from a psychological point of view as most legends and traditions are: they give some clue to the inner mind of those who first elaborate them and of those who pass them on as worthy of reverent attention. Most of the legends connected with Asoka are either from a Ceylonese, or an Indian source. The two legends referred to here imply that, before Asoka's con-

version, he was known as ‘ Asoka the Wicked ’, while after it as ‘ Asoka the Pious ’. There is an old saying, ‘ No one ever became one of the vilest of mankind all of a sudden.’ Similarly it may be said with some truth that no one has ever become a saint suddenly, and the probability is that Asoka had always had a natural bent towards piety, and that the origin of the legend was a not unnatural wish of the Buddhist monks to magnify the conversion of a man in the lofty position of an emperor. The Ceylonese legend is to the effect that Asoka had slain his eldest brother in order to get to the throne, and that his brother had left a widow, who after his death gave birth to a son. ‘ The boy was born with all the marks of sanctity, and at the age of seven was an ordained monk ; he one day attracted the attention of the king, who was struck with his grave and reverend deportment. The king sent for the boy, who drew near with decorum and self-possession ; the king then said, “ Take any seat which thou thinkest befitting.” The boy advanced to the royal throne as his most befitting seat, as no other priest was present. The king then gave the boy his arm and seated him upon the throne, giving him at the same time refreshment from the royal table. He then questioned him on the doctrines of Buddha, and received from him an exposition of one of these, which was to this effect, “ Earnestness is the way to immortality : indifference is the way to death.” The king was so affected that he accepted the doctrines of Buddha, and presented the Buddhist priesthood with gifts. The next day the boy returned with thirty-two priests, and established the king and people in the faith and practice of piety. Thus King Asoka laid aside the Brahmanical faith of his father, and accepted as a lay disciple the sacred Law of Buddha.’ The Indian legend would make Asoka out to be a very ruthless person : ‘ One day the king, transported with rage, slew with his own hands five hundred of his ministers who had ventured to dispute his will, and another day he ordered five hundred women of the palace to be burnt alive for mocking him by breaking off the leaves of an Asoka tree (the Jacksonia of botany) in the palace garden. His ministers entreated the king not to defile his royal hands with blood, but to appoint an executioner to carry out his

sentences: the king accepted the advice, and appointed as chief executioner one Chandagirika by name, a wretch of unexampled cruelty, who loved to torture animals, and had slain his own father and mother. The king further had a prison built for his special benefit with a very attractive exterior, so that men might be tempted to enter it, but once inside they were to suffer all the tortures of hell—and one has only to see some of the sculptures on the walls of certain Buddhist shrines to realize what the tortures of hell mean to the imagination of a Buddhist. The command of the king was that no man who entered the prison was to leave it alive. One day a holy ascetic, named Balapandita, entered the gate of the prison, and was instantly seized by the jailer. The holy man was given seven days' respite, and was then ruthlessly cast into a seething cauldron of filth, beneath which a great fire had been kindled. The cruel jailer looking in saw the holy man calmly seated on a lotus, unscathed by the fire. The king came to see the miracle, and being converted by the sight and by the exhortations of the holy man, embraced the true religion, and forsook the paths of wickedness.' It is added that the prison was afterwards demolished, and the inhuman jailer burnt alive in his own cauldron.

King Asoka formally entered the Buddhist order in the eleventh year of his reign as an ordained monk. The historian has said, 'It was a strange spectacle that of a reigning monarch turned monk, so strange that doubts have been thrown on the fact, but there is no reason for not accepting as literal truth King Asoka's own plain statement in his rock edicts, in which he contrasts his position as a careless lay disciple with that he has attained as a zealous monk.' It is not unusual both in Burmah and Ceylon for men to enter the Buddhist order temporarily and after a time resume civil life: this was doubtless what Asoka did: at certain periods he probably went into retreat, and left his ministers to administer the kingdom in his name. There is independent testimony, moreover, that Asoka did really become a Buddhist monk. A Chinese pilgrim, I-tsing by name, writing a thousand years after Asoka's time, notes that the statues of the emperor represent him as wearing a monk's robe of a particular

pattern, which he could not have worn had he not been a monk lawfully initiated and ordained. 'Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might,' was Asoka's motto in his new zeal for religion. He became a most enthusiastic missionary in the cause of Buddhism: his recorded words are proof of this: 'What is the object of all my exertion? Simply to acquit my debt to living beings, that I may make some of them happy here, and that they may hereafter attain to Heaven.' It must be remembered that though the Founder of Buddhism had been born just three hundred years before Asoka's conversion, his teaching had hardly, if indeed at all, penetrated far into India; it had been mainly confined to the land that gave it birth, a land that was under the suzerainty of Nipal, and which included Benares, and the districts to the north of that holy city. It was the work of the missionary emperor that established it practically as a State religion in the wide regions it was introduced into. Ceylon, the independent kingdoms in the south of the Indian peninsula, Mysore, the Bombay coast, the Mahratta country, the Himalayas, Kashmir, and Burmah, all came eventually under its influence. From being the religion of a clan, it became the religion of a world, and the transformation was the work of Asoka alone.

The whole administrative machinery of the empire had for its basis 'The Law of Piety'. Censors were appointed by Asoka to supervise the execution of his precepts, 'in order,' as he said, 'that piety may be furthered not only amongst the king's own lieges, but among the semi-independent border tribes,' whom in one of his edicts he had thus specially enjoined, 'Shun evil-doing that ye may escape destruction.' These censors seem also to have had other duties to perform among which was the special one of watching over the interests of the poor and the aged, while securing the general welfare and happiness of all classes of the population. The orders given to these censors may best be understood from a consideration of the leading principles of the Dharmma, or Law of Piety, as laid down in the edicts of 'The Humane One', as Asoka always preferred to be designated :—'All men are regarded by the sovereign as his children, owing him filial obedience and

entitled to receive from him a parent's care. Every man is bound to cultivate the virtues of self-control, purity of mind, gratitude, and fidelity. He must abstain from all such vices as rage, cruelty, anger, and jealousy. He should constantly practise self-examination, and be strictly truthful. Great stress is also laid on the imperative duty of respecting the sanctity of all animal life and of treating all living creatures with kindness. Obedience to parents is deemed an essential article of faith : the aged, moreover, are to receive due reverence from the young, and the teacher from his pupil. Relatives, ascetics, and Brahmans are to be treated with decorum : servants and slaves with kindness. The duty of liberality and hospitality is enjoined on all. All sects and creeds are in fundamental agreement as to essentials, and all alike aim at the attainment of purity of mind and self-control ; therefore he who follows the path marked out by the Law of Piety must abstain from speaking aught evil concerning his neighbour's faith.' Supplementary instructions addressed to the royal officers incidentally reveal what the emperor's ideas were as to what constituted the ideal official ; he should be a man free from all envy, harshness, and impatience. 'Perseverance and the firm determination to resist all temptation to indolence or discouragement are the root of success in the performance of all official duties.' Asoka did not confine himself to theories as to the principles on which his new kingdom of righteousness was to be administered, but set an excellent example in his own person. Promptitude in the administration of justice, and a ready access to all petitioners were some of the leading characteristics of his administration. He announced to his people that he was ready at any place, and at any hour of the day or night, to receive complaints and redress grievances. To this announcement he added these words : 'I am never satisfied with the adequacy of my own exertions, or the promptitude of my decision of cases. Work I must for the public benefit, and the object of all my exertion is simply to acquit my debt to all living beings so that I may make some of them happy in this world, and that hereafter they may attain Heaven.' A fair measure of success seems to have resulted from Asoka's

personal exertions in the cause of practical morality, and he was able to say: 'Whatever meritorious deeds I have done, those deeds the people have copied and imitated: whence follows the consequence that growth is now taking place, and doubtless there will soon be a further increase of the virtues I have inculcated.' The historian's comment on this is: 'No doubt the personal example of the sovereign, supported by all the efforts of a highly-organized bureaucracy, and a rich and zealous clergy must have been a potent factor in securing popular adherence to the royal views.' Asoka's careful provision for the comfort of man and beast within his own dominions by plantations of shade-giving and fruit-bearing trees, the digging of wells, and the erection of rest-houses and watering-places along the high roads and principal thoroughfares: his attention to the cultivation and dissemination of medicinal herbs and roots both within his own dominions and in the territories of independent sovereigns, all alike prove his title to the designation he assumed soon after his conversion of 'The Humane One'.

The character of the emperor is revealed in his edicts. The teaching of these, it has been said, is intensely human and severely practical: the object aimed at throughout being the happiness of all living creatures, man and beast. The teacher assumes and categorically asserts that filial piety and the other virtues commended open the path to happiness here and hereafter, but no attempt is made to prove any proposition by reasoning. No foundation of theology or metaphysics is laid, and the ethical precepts inculcated are set forth for purely practical purposes as being self-evidently true. Men are exhorted to work out their own salvation. This is quite in accordance with the essence of Buddhism as revealed by later scholars. Professor Rhys Davids has clearly shown that the attainment of what is called in Sanskrit Jivanmukti, salvation during this life, is of the very life and soul of Buddhistic teaching. At the same time, just as the deed done in the past would undoubtedly influence the present, so the deed done in the present would influence the future life of the individual; and the emperor considered the life hereafter in his teaching as well as the life present. Thus he said: 'Whatsoever

exertions His Majesty, King Piyadasi, has made, all are made with a view to the life hereafter so that every one may be freed from peril, which peril is sin. Difficult, verily, it is to attain such freedom whether a man be of low or of high degree save by the utmost exertion and complete self-denial, but especially difficult it is for the man of high degree.' Enlightened tolerance breathes through the whole of Asoka's teaching: it must be remembered, however, that the only organized religion existing in India in Asoka's time was Hinduism. Neither Muhammadanism, nor Christianity, nor Zoroastrianism, were then known in the world. In enjoining, therefore, on his subjects toleration of other men's faith, he has in view only the many sects of Hinduism, which were all connected together by the bonds of common sentiment. But there was one class among the Hindus of whom Asoka was not so tolerant, because of their claims to be gods upon earth. Professor Rhys Davids has shown that in the regions of India where Buddhism first arose, some three hundred years before Asoka's time, the Brahmans had not yet acquired that supreme authority in social and religious questions which they now have in modern India, and which they are represented in Manu and the Epics to have acquired when those books were composed. 'The Kshatriya clansmen,' says the Professor, 'no doubt esteemed the Brahmans highly, but they esteemed themselves more highly still. They mentioned themselves first and designated the Brahmans as of low birth, compared to the Kshatriyas.' By Asoka's time, however, the Brahmans seem to have acquired greater importance, and to have put forth claims to pre-eminence: Asoka is said to have prided himself upon the measures he took for humbling the arrogance of the Brahmanical teachers. Several of Asoka's edicts record the successive steps taken by the emperor to give effect to the principle of the sanctity of all animal life, one of the cardinal doctrines of his religion. During the first eight years of his reign no scruples on this point appear to have troubled him, and vast numbers of animals were slaughtered each day for the royal kitchen. From the ninth to the thirteenth year of his reign there was a marked diminution in the number killed: and after the thirteenth

year no living creatures would seem to have been sacrificed. This was the year when the Law of Piety was first promulgated and the religious assemblies instituted. Till then hunting had been one of the amusements of the emperor: its place was now taken by pious tours or pilgrimages, which were devoted to almsgiving, preaching, and ethical discussions. Asoka's grandfather, Chandra Gupta, had been very fond of hunting, and an account of one of his hunting expeditions has been given by the Greek historian, Megasthenes: it will probably do equally well for one of Asoka's expeditions also: 'One purpose for which the king leaves his palace is to go to the chase, for which he departs in Bacchanalian fashion: crowds of women, forming his Amazonian guard, surround him, and outside of this circle, spearmen are ranged. The road is marked off with ropes, and it is death for men and women alike to pass within the ropes. Men with drums and gongs lead the procession. The king hunts in the enclosures, and shoots arrows from a platform. At his side stand two or three armed women. If he hunts in the open grounds he shoots from the back of an elephant. Of the women, some are in chariots, some on horses, and some even on elephants: and they are equipped with weapons of every kind as if they were going on a campaign.' It was characteristic of Asoka, that, being a strong ruler and a pre-eminently just one, he did not abolish capital punishment. In the twenty-seventh year of his reign he ruled that every prisoner condemned to death should invariably be granted a respite of three days wherein to prepare for death.

Beyond a record that Asoka had brothers and sisters, and that his sons were graded, some as the queen's sons and some as the king's sons, the latter alone appearing to have held office as viceroys or governors of the empire, there are only legends to go upon for an account of the family of Asoka. One of these legends is connected with one of his sons named Dharmma Vivardhana. The legend goes that one of King Asoka's queens, whom he married late in life, was a young and unprincipled woman, who fell in love with her own step-son because of his beautiful eyes. The virtuous prince rejected her advances, and it was the old story of vindictive hate which the wrong involved

in spurning a beautiful form is said to induce in the female breast; the love of the queen turned to hate. By her influence the young prince was appointed as viceroy of the distant province of Taxila in the Punjab. He was warned by the emperor on leaving to verify all orders he received: the only genuine ones would be those that had as a sign manual an impression of the emperor's teeth on them. The queen bided her time, but at length, after the lapse of some months, she wrote a dispatch to the viceroy's ministers at Taxila directing them to put the eyes of the young viceroy out on its receipt; and then to lead him and his wife into the mountains and there leave them to perish. She sealed the dispatch with royal red wax, and while the king was asleep furtively obtained an impression of his teeth, and promptly sent the order off. The ministers naturally hesitated on receiving the orders, and the viceroy asked them the reason for their hesitation: they said that they wished to refer to the capital before taking final action, but he refused to allow this, saying to them: 'My father, if he has ordered my death, must be obeyed: the seal of his teeth is a sure sign of the correctness of the orders. No mistake is possible.' An outcaste was ordered to pluck his eyes out, and he went forth with his faithful wife to seek his bread. In the course of their wanderings the couple arrived at the emperor's capital; and as the prince was singing to his lute one day, the emperor heard him and sent for him. He recognized his son and asked him what had happened. The story goes on to relate that the emperor took his son to see a great saint, named Ghosha, who lived in a monastery by the holy tree of Mahabodhi, and begged him to give his son his sight again. The saint ordered a great congregation to assemble to hear him preach the Law of Piety: each person was ordered to bring a vessel in which to receive his tears. A vast assemblage came together: all were moved to tears on hearing the sermon, and their tears fell into the vessels they had brought with them. The saint then collected the tears in a golden vase and thus addressed the congregation: 'The doctrine which I have expounded is the most mysterious of Buddha's teaching: if the exposition is not true, if there is error in what I have said, then

let things remain as they are, but if what I have said is true, let this man, after washing his eyes with these tears, receive his sight.' Whereupon, the story concludes, the prince washed in the tears and received his sight. The queen was burnt alive, and all who had been implicated were duly punished. Ceylon, it has been already said, was one of the places that came under the influence of Asoka's missionary enterprise. There are two legends connected with the conversion of Ceylon to Buddhism. The Ceylonese legend ascribes it to a son and daughter of Asoka, named respectively Mahendra and Sanghamitra, who were said to have the bar sinister on their escutcheon, being the children of Asoka by a Central Indian princess. The son is said to have converted the king and some forty thousand of his followers by his eloquent preaching, and when he was approached by the princesses for permission to enter the order, he suggested that his sister should be sent for, saying that she could ordain them, but male missionaries had no authority to admit female converts into their order. Thereupon the King of Ceylon sent a mission to Asoka to ask him to send his daughter : this Asoka did, and sent a branch of the bo-tree with her. Professor Oldenberg sees in this myth a wish of the Buddhist monks of the island to possess a history of Buddhist institutions, and to connect it with the most distinguished person conceivable. The Indian legend also attributes the conversion of the island to one Mahendra, but in this legend he is described as a half-brother of the emperor. The story goes that before his conversion, Mahendra had been extravagant, wasteful, and cruel, and that the people had complained to the emperor about his conduct. The emperor was in a dilemma, and said to Mahendra, 'If I punish you I dread the resentment of my ancestors : if I pass over your transgressions, I dread the ill opinion of my people.' The prince asked for a respite of seven days : this was granted him ; he was thrown meanwhile into a dark dungeon, but was provided with luxurious food. At the end of the first day, the guard called out, 'One day has gone : six days are left.' So it went on till the sixth day had expired, by which time the prisoner's repentance and discipline were complete and he attained to the

rank of a saint, and feeling conscious of miraculous powers, ascended into the air. Asoka then visited him, and finding him raised to the highest rank of holiness he gave him permission to return to his place. Mahendra replied that he had lost all taste for the pleasures of the world, and desired only to live in solitude. The king had a stone house built for him by the genii. The story continues that Mahendra, having apparently solved the problem of aerial flight, eventually passed through the air to Ceylon, and converted the island people. There is a quarter of the city of Patna to this day known as Mahendra Mahal, and the site of an old stone palace has been identified with that on which the palace of the Nawabs of Patna now stands: so there is probably more foundation for the Indian legend than there is for the Ceylonese.

It was at one time thought that Asoka held a great Council in the eighteenth year after his coronation to settle the Buddhist canonical scriptures, but recent researches, his biographer has stated, go to prove that the Ceylonese legend on which the theory is based has no foundation in fact; and that the truth probably is that the Buddhist canon grew by a process of gradual accretion and acceptance, with little, if any, help from formal councils in its earlier stages. The Ceylonese legend thus runs: 'Heretics had increased in such numbers that for seven years the rites of the Church remained in abeyance, and when the monks were ordered to resume the services they refused to do so until heresy had been removed out of the land. The king's minister, who had given the order, adopted the heroic expedient of cutting off the heads of several of the contumacious ecclesiastics as they sat in convocation. The king had to seek for absolution for this deed of his minister, and he determined to seek the advice of one Tishya, the son of Moggali, an ancient monk, whom he summoned from his far distant retreat for the purpose of consulting him. On his arrival, the aged monk was received by the king with extraordinary honour and reverence. In order that he might test the powers of the saint, he asked that a miracle should be performed. He specially requested that an earthquake should be produced, to be confined to a limited space. The aged saint there-

upon placed a chariot, a horse, a man, and a vessel filled with water, one on each side of a square space, exactly on the boundary lines at the four corners : he then produced an earthquake which caused the half of each object within the boundary line to shake, while the other half remained quiescent. Satisfied with this display of the holy man's miraculous powers, the king inquired if the sacrilegious murder of the priests by his minister was to be accounted his own sin. The saint ruled that where there is no wilful intention there is no sin, and he accordingly absolved the king. A great assembly of priests was then convened by the king, who examined each man individually as to his faith, his spiritual director being seated at his side to hear the answer. The answers of some sixty thousand monks did not come up to the saint's standard of what constituted the true primitive teaching of the Master, and they were expelled from the Church as Nonconformists. A thousand of the more orthodox monks were selected to form a Council, and to verify the canon of the scriptures. They followed the procedure of the two earlier Councils in reciting and verifying the whole body of the scriptures. What this meant may be judged of by the headings of the most essential points of the doctrines of Buddha as given by Professor Rhys Davids. These are 'the Three Signs, the Four Truths, the Five Hindrances, the Eightfold Path, the constituents of Arahatship, (the state of him who is worthy), and so on'. It is not to be wondered at therefore that it is said in the legend that the session of the Council lasted nine months ; surely the longest in duration of time of any Church Congress whose doings have been recorded in past or present times. At the close of the session it is added the 'earth, on beholding the re-establishment of religion, quaked as if to say, "well done"'.

For the greater part of Asoka's own personal history traditions and legends only can be drawn on ; this is the case with the details of Asoka's old age. Here again there are two legends, a Ceylonese and an Indian one ; the latter, being the most picturesque and more in keeping with the generally received opinion of Asoka's personal character, may be given here. It is styled 'The dotage of King Asoka', and it thus runs :—'The king had vowed

a thousand million pieces of gold to the Master's service, and had actually, when far advanced in years, given 960 millions: in hopes of completing the amount before his death, he was daily sending great treasures of silver and gold to the chief monastery at the capital. Then the heir apparent thought it high time to interfere, and on the advice of the ministers forbade the treasurer to comply with the king's demands. Asoka then began to give away all the plate that furnished the royal table, first the gold, then the silver, and finally the iron. The ministers then provided a plain earthenware service; thereupon the old king said to them, "Who is king of this country?" The ministers did obeisance and respectfully replied:—"Your Majesty is king." Asoka then burst into tears, and cried: "Why do you say from kindness what is not true? I am fallen from my royal state. Save this half-apple, there is nought of which I can dispose as sovereign." Then the king sent the half-apple to the monastery to be divided amongst the monks, who were to be thus addressed:—"Behold this is my last gift; to this pass have come the riches of the Emperor of India. My royalty and my power have departed: deprived of health, of physic, and physicians, to me no support is left save that of the Assembly of the Saints; eat this fruit, which is offered with the intent that the whole Assembly may partake of it, my last gift." Once more Asoka asked his ministers, "Who is sovereign of this country?" The ministers did obeisance and again respectfully replied, "Sire, your Majesty is sovereign of this country." King Asoka, recovering his composure, responded in verse, and said:—

"This earth encinctured by its sapphire zone,
This earth bedecked with gleaming jewels rare,
This earth, of hills the everlasting throne,
This earth of all creation mother fair,
I give to the Assembly.

The blessing which attends such gifts be mine:
Not Indra's Halls, nor Brahma's Courts I crave,
Nor yet the splendours which round monarchs shine,
And pass away like rushing Ganga's wave,
Abiding not a moment.

With faith unchangeable, which nought can shake,
This gift of earth's immeasurable sphere
I to the Saints' Assembly freely make;
And self-control I crave, of boons most dear,
A good which changeth never." '

This was recorded in an inscription on a stone pillar to the south of Pataliputra. The legend then proceeds :—' King Asoka having thus spoken, sealed the deed of gift, and presently fulfilled the law of mortality.'

The account which has so far been given of Asoka deals chiefly with his personal history, most of which is concerned with his care for religion, and for the propagation of Buddhism throughout not only his own dominions, but in foreign countries not under his sway. It is under this aspect that he has been designated 'The great missionary emperor'. There is, however, another side to the character of Asoka, which must be taken into consideration, and that is his capacity as a ruler. Everything points to the fact that he was a strong ruler, ruling his vast empire wisely and well. His biographer has said of him in this connexion :—' The emperor, though destitute of the powerful aids of modern civilization, was able to enforce his will at Kabul, distant twelve hundred miles from his capital, the modern Patna, and at Ginnar, distant a thousand miles. He was strong enough to sheathe his sword in the ninth year of his reign, to treat unruly border tribes with forbearance, to cover his dominions with splendid buildings, and to devote his energies to the diffusion of morality and piety.' His edicts show him, moreover, to have been a magnanimous ruler, fully entitled to the designation he always wished to be styled by of "Asoka the Humane". It has already been shown how vast the empire was that was ruled over by Asoka. By his system of tours, or, as he preferred to call them, pilgrimages, Asoka appears to have made himself acquainted with every corner of it. In the course of these tours he built monasteries, erected pillars, and even founded new cities. Thus the modern capitals of both Nipal and Kashmir appear to have owed their origin to him. Indeed, monuments testifying to his ubiquity are to be found all over the regions which comprised his empire. His tours

show that he fully realized that one of the first duties of a ruler is to make himself acquainted with the people over whom it is his destiny to rule. It is almost unnecessary to state that the government of Asoka was absolute and autocratic : everything depended on the royal will : but his rule was what British rule in the present day has been styled, pre-eminently a benevolent despotism. The will of the emperor was communicated to his subjects through the agency of a bureaucracy, at the head of which were the viceroys of the emperor, who were generally his sons or near relatives. Some modern Indian critics of the British Government complain that it governs too much by rule of thumb, that it is a government by rules and regulations ; all responsible government must be, as it always has been, such. These critics, however, are nothing if not inconsistent; give them an office and their first procedure is to post up in a prominent place these very rules and regulations for its conduct, which they are so fond of inveighing against as a purely British institution. It was only the outlying provinces that were thus ruled by viceroys ; the home provinces, as they may be called, appear to have been administered by local governors acting under the direct orders of the emperor. Next in rank to the governors of provinces, were officers styled Rajjukas, corresponding to commissioners, and below them were the Pradesikas, or provincials, corresponding to District officers. There were magistrates and censors whose principal duties have been thus defined :—'They were directed in general terms to care for the happiness of the emperor's subjects, and especially to redress cases of wrongful confinement or unjust corporal punishment ; they were also empowered to grant remissions of sentences in cases where the criminal was entitled to consideration by reason of advanced years, sudden calamity, or the burden of a large family. They also acted as imperial almoners, distributing the gifts made by the sovereign.' There were other officials known as Wardens of the Marches, and certain others known as simply inspectors. It seems probable that as in the case of Aurangzib's court inspectors, considerable friction arose at times between these latter officials and those in the regular line, more especially as their duties were not very

clearly defined, but one of their functions would seem to be the writing of reports on what they saw and heard in the provinces they visited ; they were probably confidential news-writers, such as to this day Oriental potentates employ so largely. The cognomen of many families points to this occupation having been hereditary in many families ; such a cognomen is Chit-navis, literally, a letter-writer.

The civil administration of the empire seems to have been no whit inferior to that elaborated by the great Akbar many hundreds of years afterwards. There was an irrigation department, and much attention seems to have been paid to the development of agriculture, on which the prosperity of the empire so largely depended, as indeed it does now. Special revenue officers were appointed to collect the land revenue, which then as now, was the mainstay of Indian finance. All agricultural land was regarded as the property of the Crown, and the cultivators appear to have paid into the State Treasury one-fourth of the produce, in addition to rent ; and all castes whose occupation was connected with the land, as indeed all the castes in the innumerable villages throughout India are in some way connected, were subject to the supervision of revenue officers. Good roads were maintained, and pillars erected along the principal highways to serve as milestones. Such pillars, called kos pillars, or two-mile-stones, were erected by later Mogul emperors, and many of them are still to be seen along the main roads leading out of the northern capitals of India. Asoka's great capital was a microcosm of the empire, and all accounts agree as to its magnificence. The old walls, as seen by Megasthenes, were veritable 'wooden walls' ; but Asoka built an outer wall of masonry round them. Excavations in modern days have revealed some of the remains of these inner and outer walls, as also of the massive brick and stone buildings of which the city of Asoka consisted. A Commission of some thirty members administered the affairs of this great city ; all sorts of business was transacted by the six boards, each consisting of five members, into which the Commission was subdivided : the business included such matters as the superintendence of industrial arts and artisans, of all trade, and of the collection of dues from all goods entering the city,

also the superintendence of foreigners, and the registration of births and deaths. Indeed very much the same functions as those discharged by modern municipal committees seem to have been discharged by this Commission. In the department of criminal justice, Asoka, as might have been expected of so humane a monarch, while retaining capital punishment, introduced some mitigations into the sanguinary penal code of his grandfather; some of these have been already referred to; on the anniversary of his coronation all criminals awaiting execution were pardoned. The principles he inculcated on all his judicial officers must have resulted in an improved administration of justice. For the maintenance of order and peace throughout his dominions Asoka kept up a standing army. This would appear to have been a very formidable machine, comprising as it did 60,000 infantry, 30,000 cavalry, and 9,000 elephants, besides chariots; it would also appear to have been very highly organized according to the standards of antiquity. It is of interest to note that a very severe bit which is still in common use by people all over the country, and which English sportsmen have often inveighed against on account of its severity, was part of the equipment of the cavalry in these early days; it consists of an iron bar with sharp spikes of iron or brass.

The writer of an article entitled *Archaeology in India*, which has appeared in a recent number of *The Times*, has said: 'The ancient remains of India are comprised in the three indigenous groups of Buddhist, Jain, and Hindu monuments. To these may be added the foreign group of buildings erected by the Muhammadans from about 1200 A.D. onwards, the product of Saracenic Art, which are preserved chiefly in northern India, and some of which are among the finest architectural creations in the world. The earliest antiquities of India are those of the Buddhists, who were its first builders in stone. These monuments begin about the middle of the third century B.C., under the Buddhist king Asoka, and extend over a period of something like a thousand years. They consist of pillars, topes (structural relic or memorial mounds), churches, and monasteries. There are also numerous Buddhist inscriptions beginning in the reign of Asoka and found all over India. They are

inscribed on monolith columns (of which ten are known, and some are over 40 feet in height), in cave temples, and on slabs of rock. Written in the earliest known forms of Indian script, they are composed in an ancient vernacular called Prakrit and derived from Sanskrit.' It has been said that the magnitude and magnificence of Asoka's architectural achievements so impressed the imagination of the people that they were almost universally believed to have been wrought by supernatural agency. The massiveness and exquisite finish of Asoka's great monoliths especially bear eloquent testimony to the skill and resource of the architects and stonecutters of the age. A visit to some of these impresses the beholder in the same way that a visit to the great pyramids of Egypt does; one marvels where the stone came from out of which they have been hewn, with not a quarry anywhere near, and how the great columns were placed in position. An account that has been given of the removal by the Emperor Firoz Shah Tughlak of one of Asoka's great monoliths will give some idea of its size and of the magnitude of the task. The monolith in question was removed from its site in the Ambala District to Delhi; the account reads thus:—'All the people in the neighbourhood and vast numbers of soldiers, horsemen and footmen, were ordered to assemble and to bring with them all necessary implements and materials for lowering the great column. Immense quantities of the wild cotton of the silk-cotton tree were placed on the ground all round the column. Then the earth at its base being removed, it fell over gently into the bed thus prepared for it; when the foundations were examined, a large square stone was found which had served as a base; this was also taken out. The cotton was removed by degrees till the column rested securely on the ground. It was then encased from top to bottom in reeds and raw skins, to prevent its suffering any damage during transport. A special car with forty-two wheels was then constructed, and ropes attached to each wheel. After infinite labour and difficulty the column was raised on to the car; two hundred men pulled at each of the ropes, and the car was thus brought to the banks of the river Jumna. Here it was met by the sultan, who had collected a vast number of boats, each capable of carrying some thousands

of maunds ; the column was transferred with great ingenuity to these boats, and thus taken across to the opposite bank to old Delhi, where it was landed. It was eventually raised on to the new site prepared for it, the same precautions being used that had attended its removal.' The special interest of this column is that it is the only one on which is inscribed the edict styled 'The King's measures for the propagation of the Law of Piety'. Some of the memorial mounds, also styled stupas, were of great height, one in Ceylon is said to have towered to a height of 400 feet, and one in Afghanistan to a height of 300 feet. One of the best preserved of these stupas is in the neighbourhood of Benares ; like the majority of these memorials, it is a solid hemispherical mass of solid masonry on a platform ; this allows of that curious practice, which may still be seen surviving in India, and which has been practised both by Buddhists and by Hindus for countless generations, which in Sanskrit is known as Pradakshina, in English as perambulation round a sacred object. On the summit is a square altar-shaped structure, surmounted by a series of stone umbrellas.

The various inscriptions attributed to the time of Asoka are to be found on rocks, in caves, and on pillars and columns : those on rocks perhaps form the most peculiar and characteristic monuments of the reign of Asoka ; one of these has for its subject an address to the clergy of Magadha, as the modern province of Behar was once styled. The cave inscriptions mostly record the bestowal of caves as dwellings for the numerous class of ascetics, or as they were called in early Buddhist times, hermits. Professor Rhys Davids has well said of the Oriental ascetic :—'There is no question of penance for sin, of an appeal to the mercy of an offended deity. It is the boast of superiority advanced by the man able by strength of will to keep his body under, and not only to despise comfort but to welcome pain. Both in the West and the East such claims were often gladly admitted. We hear in India of the reverence paid to the man who (to quote the words of a Buddhist poet)—

> Bescorched, befrozen, lone in fearsome woods,
> Naked, without a fire, afire within,
> Struggled in awful silence toward the goal.'

Any one who has witnessed the extraordinary discomfort to which the Indian ascetic subjects himself will be able to realize the truth of the Professor's description. The writer of this sketch once, when visiting a great fair, rode through an avenue of heads with dishevelled and matted dust-coloured hair, on which the sun beat by day and the dews fell by night, whose owners were buried up to their chins in sand. Many of the pillar or column inscriptions record the personal visits made by Asoka to revered places of pilgrimage, such as the birthplace of the Buddha in the Sakiya territory on the Nipal frontier, and memorial mounds of note. Each of the celebrated edicts of Asoka is appropriated to a special subject. One is styled the epilogue, and this passage occurs in it, showing that Asoka found it necessary continually to reiterate his teaching :—'Certain phrases in the edicts have been uttered again and again by reason of the honied sweetness of such and such a topic in the hope that the people may act up to them.'

Sir W. W. Hunter has said :—'During the last thousand years Buddhism has been a banished religion from its native Indian home. But it has won greater triumphs in its exile than it could have ever achieved in the land of its birth. It created a literature and a religion for nearly one-half of the human race, and it is supposed by its influence on early Christianity to have affected the beliefs of a large part of the other half. Five hundred millions of men, or forty per cent. of the inhabitants of the world, still follow the teaching of Buddha. At this day it forms, with Christianity and Islam, one of the three great religions of the world ; and the most numerously followed of the three. The noblest survivals of Buddhism in India are to be found not among any peculiar body, but in the religion of the whole Hindu people ; in that principle of the brotherhood of man, with the reassertion of which each new revival of Hinduism starts ; in the asylum which the great Hindu sect of Vaishnavs affords to women who have fallen victims to caste rules, to the widow and the outcaste; in that gentleness and charity to all men which take the place of a poor-law in India, and give a high significance to the half-satirical epithet of the mild Hindu.' The special sect, known as Jains, who number some one and a quarter

millions in India derives its origin from Buddhism. Of this great class Sir W. W. Hunter has said :—'The Jains of India are usually merchants or bankers. Their charity is boundless; and they form the chief supporters of the beast hospitals, which the old Buddhistic tenderness for animals has left in many of the cities of India.' And to this testimony to the generous and humane qualities of the great Marwari merchants, the writer of this sketch from a long and intimate acquaintance with some of the best representatives of the class, can set his seal that it is true.

CHAPTER II

THE FOUNDER OF THE MOGUL DYNASTY

Babar, 1482–1530

Babar, whose name by interpretation is 'the Lion', was the sixth in descent from the great Timur, the Tartar, sometimes known as Tamerlane. Timur was descended from Chengiz Khan, and, as Colonel Malleson has shown, was a man born to be a conqueror and a leader of men. When he died in 1405, he left behind him one of the greatest empires the world has ever seen. This empire was soon broken up under his descendants: one of these, Umar Shaikh, was king of the Province of Ferghana, sometimes known as Khokand, on the banks of the river Jaxartes. Umar Shaikh was the father of Babar; he seems to have been a man of some ambition, eager to get back some of his ancestor's dominions, and his mantle was destined to fall upon Babar, who became King of Ferghana at the early age of twelve on the death of his father in 1494. The account given of Umar Shaikh's death by the Turki biographer is a quaint one. The king was one day visiting his pigeons in their house overhanging a cliff, when by a singular accident the whole building slid down the cliff and he fell ingloriously to the bottom, and thus 'winged his flight to the other world with his pigeons and his dovecote'. Babar seems to have received a good education during his early boyhood, and his remarkable attainments in the two languages he wrote, Turki and Persian, show steady application to work on his part. His early training appears to have been taken in hand by the women of his own family. The Mogul women of those times seem to have been brave, devoted, and simple: retaining the virtues of the desert unspoiled by luxury. Babar himself acknowledged the debt he owed to the women of his family, and especially to his grandmother,

of whom he has said: 'Few equalled her in sense and sagacity: she was wonderfully far-sighted and judicious. Many important matters and enterprises were undertaken at her instance.' Indeed Babar is said to have found his grandmother a tower of strength during the early years of his kingship. In princely households in India to this day the chief's grandmother generally wields more power than any other member of the household, and she is invariably consulted in all important undertakings. That Babar benefited by his early education and took pains to improve himself as years went on is evident from his famous memoirs, which are the chief source of much information about himself and his career. It has been said that 'these memoirs show Babar to have been a man of fine literary taste: besides being a record of the daring adventures and persevering efforts of his earlier days, they contain the personal impressions and the acute reflections of a cultivated man of the world, well read in Eastern literature, a close and curious observer, quick in perception, a discerning judge of persons, and a devoted lover of nature, one, moreover, who was well able to express his thoughts and observations in clear and vigorous language'. Of their historical value a writer has further said: 'The utter frankness of self-revelation, the unconscious portraiture of all his virtues and follies, his obvious truthfulness, and fine sense of honour, give the memoirs an authority which is equal to their charm. If ever there was a case when the testimony of a single historical document, unsupported by other evidence, should be accepted as sufficient proof, it is the case with Babar's memoirs. No reader of this prince of autobiographers can doubt his honesty or his competence as a witness and chronicler.' Babar's grandson, the great Akbar, is said to have esteemed them so much that he had them translated into Persian. Among other influences at work in Babar's mental development were those of his father and his tutor. Babar always speaks well of his father; thus he says of him: 'his generosity was large, and so was his whole soul: he was of a rare humour, eloquent and sweet in his discourse, yet brave withal and manly.' His tutor gets the credit of having been 'a strict disciplinarian', no slight distinction

for a man about the court of a ruling sovereign in the East. Many such a man is to be found, however, even in the Orient, as the writer himself knows from his own experience, and when such men are found they are worth their weight in gold. Of his uncle, too, the King of Samarcand, Babar speaks in terms of no unstinted praise: 'A man scrupulously devout, a plain honest Turk, a man of few words, just and true in his dealings, faithful to his treaties, and never swerving by a line from his covenant: his words were bonds and his oaths were oracles: his heart as far from greed as Heaven from earth,' and he adds a characteristic touch, 'He was also a rare sportsman.' With such influences about him it is no wonder that Babar turned out the man he did.

Babar succeeded to a shorn kingdom: his father was being besieged by invaders when he met with his death at his new capital. Babar promptly seized the citadel of the fortress he was in at the time, Andijan, and made terms with the invaders, and was allowed to retain a portion of his father's kingdom only. His uncle of Samarcand had been one of the invaders. The greater part of the rest of his life was spent in trying to recover his own lost patrimony, and the lost empire of his ancestor, Timur: it became his great ambition especially to seat himself on that ancestor's throne at Samarcand. His great struggles to attain this object of his ambition were to end in the final loss of empire in Central Asia, but in the acquisition of a far greater one for his descendants in Hindustan. In the course of the contest he was to show that he possessed all the qualities that go to make a great ruler. He is recorded to have taken his responsibilities very seriously even at the early age he had succeeded to his kingdom, and to have then set himself to live by rule: in his memoirs he says: 'This year I began to abstain from forbidden and doubtful meats, and I extended my precautions to the knife, the spoon, and the tablecloth: I also seldom omitted my midnight prayers.' His whole life was to be one of struggle and adventure, and finally of conquest: in all the vicissitudes he passed through, he allowed nothing to discourage him and he never lost faith. The characteristics that shine out most conspicuously

during the earlier period of his career are his serene constancy of purpose, and his noble fortitude. Even as a boy he displayed that rare quality of patience. Colonel Malleson has said : 'For two years after the retirement of the invaders, the boy rested, consolidating his resources and watching his opportunities.' His opportunity came with the breaking out of internal troubles in Samarcand. He made one of his rapid marches and the city surrendered to him towards the close of 1497. The discipline he was able to maintain among his troops was all in his favour in conciliating the inhabitants of the city. The story goes that a number of traders had been looted by his men outside the city walls. Babar at once issued an order demanding immediate restitution of all their property to the traders, and 'there was not a piece of thread or a broken needle that was not restored to its owner'. Babar entered the city in triumph, and at once rode to the garden palace where the nobles, the priests, and the people paid him homage. He had attained his heart's desire, but his triumph was short-lived : he sat on the throne of Timur for the short space of one hundred days only. His discipline was distasteful to the army, and finding they were not allowed to indulge in their hereditary amusement of looting and pillage, his troops deserted him in their thousands. This was not to be the only occasion when his insistence on principles of humanity and consideration for the conquered was to prove to be to his own hindrance. He managed to hold his own till the news reached him that his younger brother had invaded his kingdom of Ferghana. He was about to depart when he was prostrated by a severe illness, so severe indeed was it that for four days his attendants could give him no other nourishment than just moistening his tongue with a piece of wet cotton. When he did eventually reach Ferghana, it was to find that his governor, believing him to be dead, had surrendered his capital to the rebels. To add to his misfortunes, as he left Samarcand, it was occupied by his cousin, Sultan Ali, who had also been awaiting his opportunity. These disasters affected for a time even his buoyant temperament, and he wrote : 'I had given up Samarcand to save Andijan, and now I found that I had

lost the one without preserving the other,' and he added : 'I became a prey to melancholy and vexation : I was now reduced to a sore distressed state and I wept much.' It must be remembered that he was only a boy of fifteen at the time. However, he soon recovered his natural buoyancy and he wrote : 'Filled as I was by the ambition of conquest and broad sway, one or two reverses could not make me sit down and do nothing ' :—

What though the field be lost
All is not lost—the unconquerable will
And courage never to submit or yield.

The arrival of his grandmother in his camp with her masterful personality had also encouraged him. Again for a time he possessed his soul in patience : he had that true love of nature, which Sir Horace Plunkett, speaking at the great annual meeting of the British Association of Science, said he would like to see implanted in the breast of every man whose pursuits kept him in the country : and this made him always enjoy the solitude of the country and the society of simple-minded countrymen. He spent some time in the Ailak hills among the shepherds, and the story goes that one day while he was meditating on his affairs somewhat perplexed and distracted at their apparent hopelessness, a holy man, a friend of happier days, but now an exile and a wanderer like himself, came and prayed and wept with him. That very afternoon a horseman brought him an invitation from the former governor of his capital, Andijan, telling him that if he came he would deliver the city up to him. This was too good an opportunity to be lost, so the young king promptly started off : a temporary fear seized him on the way as to the genuineness of the governor's offer, but he waived it aside with the thought that, 'Nothing happens but by God's will ' : he was rewarded for his trust and confidence, and the city was duly given up to him, and Babar was once more a king, though of a kingdom much reduced in consequence.

Again Babar determined to get possession of Samarcand : and having received an invitation from a powerful family, whom the then ruler of Samarcand had driven into exile,

he joined them and made a dash for the city, but the great clan of the Uzbeks, whose chieftain, Shaibani Khan, had long been coveting the heritage of Timur for himself, compelled him to raise the siege, and he had for the time to retire baffled. He retired for a period of rest and meditation to his favourite resort, the hills of Ailak, whence he again emerged refreshed and ready for another attack on the fortress-city. His first attempt failed; the second was successful and once more Samarcand was his. He was only just in time for, as Colonel Malleson has said in his picturesque language: 'The last of the garrison had but just yielded when the chief of the Uzbeks was seen riding hard for the place at the head of the vanguard of his army. He had to retire baffled.' Babar has thus recorded the event in his memoirs: 'For about 140 years Samarcand has been the capital of my family: a foreign robber, coming the Lord knows whence, had seized the sceptre that had dropped from our hands. God Most High now restored it, and gave me back my plundered, desolated land.' The man, whom Babar thus styled a robber, was the Uzbek chieftain, Shaibani Khan, who, having been forestalled by Babar in the manner described, had gone off to Bokhara, leaving Babar for a time, but for a time only, in undisputed possession of Samarcand. In 1501 he returned and Babar went forth to encounter him. Precipitate action on his part lost him the battle: being a bit superstitious he had consulted the astrologers: they had noted that the constellation of the Great Bear was at one time exactly midway between the two armies, but that it would soon be nearer the enemies' array: they recommended Babar to attack at once, while the stars were apparently favourable to his enterprise: he did so, and did not wait for necessary reinforcements: the result was defeat. Babar seemed to recognize that he had been somewhat precipitate, as he made this entry in his memoirs: 'These observations were idle, and there was no excuse for any haste.' He only just managed to get back into the city, but without an army. He had now only a loyal but untrained mob to defend the city with, against a host of Uzbeks: but he succeeded in holding out for seven long months. He had eventually to capitulate, and

barely escaped with his life. Again he became a wanderer and an exile. His spirits did not desert him: even his rapid flight from Samarcand gave him, he wrote, many an inspiriting gallop: in one of these he was thrown on to his head, but was soon up in the saddle again. The delight of finding rest and refreshment at the end of his first day's flight caused him to break forth into song:—

From famine and distress we have escaped to repose:
We have gained fresh life and a fresh world:
The fear of death was removed from the heart:
The torments of hunger were taken away.

Of this period of his career Colonel Malleson has said:—'For three years that followed, he lived the life of an adventurer: now an exile in the desert, now marching and gaining a throne; always joyous, always buoyed up by hope of ultimate success; always acting with energy and vigour.' Babar was one of those happily-constituted individuals who possess that unfailing receipt for the preservation of an even mind under the most adverse circumstances, the ability to interest themselves in their surroundings wherever they may be. Having again betaken himself to the hills, he amused himself talking to the shepherds, and watching their sheep and herds of mares, and taking long rambles bare-footed among the pastures. He became acquainted at this time with an old lady whose reputed age was 111, and whose memory went back to the days of Timur, in whose army when he invaded India, a relative of hers had served. In the tales this old lady told him, Babar doubtless found food for thought, and he began to dream of empire in Hindustan. Babar varied the monotony of his simple life amongst the shepherds by occasional raids against the Uzbek marauders. One of his favourite recreations on these raids was diving and swimming in the rivers he came to: he is said to have been a magnificent swimmer, and he allowed no river to prove an obstacle to his advance: he kept up his practice to the last, and one of the last rivers he was thus to cross was the Ganges.

After a series of adventures, during which he succeeded for a time in getting back a portion of his old dominions,

only to lose it again, and very nearly his life as well, as the result of treachery, he resolved to seek his fortune elsewhere. He entered this note in his memoirs : ' Then it came into my mind that it would be better to depart out of Ferghana any whither rather than go on staying thus without a foothold.' He had reached, says his biographer, the turning-point in his career : ' his new adventure was to lead him to empire.' And so, as Colonel Malleson has humorously said, ' Babar set out with a motley band of two or three hundred on his mareh against Khorasan. It seemed mere midsummer madness, but there was method in his madness.' The year was 1504, and Babar was just twenty-two, and as he has written, ' had only just begun to use the razor to his faee.' He left his native country with intense regret : long after when he had attained to dominion in India, he constantly reverted to the scenes of his boyhood. He crossed the river Oxus into the territories ruled by Khusrau Shah, and was at once joined by a relative of that chief, Baki. He found Khusrau Shah in difficulties owing to a revolt of the Moguls in his serviee. The rebels joined his camp, and the two armies soon eame in contact with each other. An interview took plaee between the leaders which resulted in the submission of Khusrau, and the reinforcement of Babar's army by practically the whole of Khusrau's army. Babar had known something of Khusrau in his earlier days, and had thoroughly despised him, regarding him as an arrant coward ' without the pluek of a barn-door fowl '. The account of the interview he aceorded him is amusing reading : Babar received him beneath a tree near the river Andarab, and he confessed to a feeling of ungenerous triumph when he saw the great man making a score of profound obeisanees, ' till he was so tired that he almost tumbled on his face.' Babar now felt himself strong enough to go on, so he crossed the Hindu Kush mountains, marched upon Kabul, and captured that city without very much difficulty : he was onee more a king. The kingdom, thus aequired by Babar, consisted at this time only of the provinces of Kabul and Ghazni, or what is now known as Eastern Afghanistan. Herat, as Colonel Malleson has shown, was the capital of an independent empire, at this time the greatest in Central

Asia : Kandahar, Bajaur, Swat, and Peshawar were ruled by chiefs who had no connexion with Kabul. The tribes of the plains and outlying valleys alone acknowledged the authority of the king of that country. The clans of the mountains were as independent and as refractory as their descendants were up to a recent period. The prince displaced by Babar was a son of the ruler of Kandahar, and was reigning ' as though all the world were at peace, and he at least were free from dangers '. Babar's arrival seemed to be opportune, as the people of Kabul were not unprepared to welcome a strong ruler of the blood royal such as they found in Babar. He soon grew to love his adopted country : and as at a later period at Agra, so now at Kabul, he proceeded to indulge his love of nature by laying out for himself a garden. He imported several fruit trees, and created of it such a pleasaunce as his soul loved, naming it Charbagh. His description of the country, as recorded in his memoirs, is said to be remarkable for the close observation and keen interest in nature it displays : he knew every animal, bird, and flower, and could tell where the rarest flowers were to be found, where the best grass for horses grew, and—a very important matter in the East where animals as well as men suffer from fever—what pastures were most free from the deadly mosquito. He soon found out one thing about his new kingdom, and that was that it was to be governed by the sword and not by the pen. He had now a large army to maintain, and he realized that the resources of his small kingdom would be insufficient for the purpose, and that he would have to go outside its boundaries to find sufficient means for the support of that army on which the stability of his throne so largely depended : the stories also that had been told him about India by the old lady among the Ailak hills, recurred to his memory, and he henceforth kept steadily before him the determination to see with his own eyes whether they were true.

An opportunity came with an invitation he received about this time to invade a district called Bhera, which was south of the river Jhilam, and therefore well within the borders of India. Babar took advantage of the invitation to enter upon the first of those expeditions which

preceded his final invasion and conquest of India. Entering India by way of the Khaibar Pass, he went in a southerly direction from Peshawar to Multan, and after following the course of the Indus for a few marches he returned to Kabul by way apparently of the Gomal Pass. Colonel Malleson has said: 'This expedition has been called Babar's first invasion of India, but as he only touched the fringes of the country it took rather the character of a reconnoitring movement. Such as it was, it filled him with an earnest desire to take an early opportunity to see more.' He thus recorded in his memoirs his first impressions: 'I beheld a new world; the grass was different, the trees different, the wild animals of a different sort, the birds of a different plumage, and the tribes of a different kind. I was struck with astonishment, and indeed there was room for wonder.' The expedition had occupied him for months, and had proved one of unexpected difficulty, but Babar, as his custom was, consoled himself with the composition of an ode on the march, and with descriptions of the beautiful scenery he met with. Water always attracted him, and he was especially struck with the sight of one great lake, known in Persian as Ab-Istada, or 'Standing Water'. His next expedition took him to Herat in June, 1506; he had received a pressing summons from the ruler of that city to help him ward off an attack from his own old enemy, the Uzbek chieftain, Shaibani, who was at the time besieging Balkh, which lay to the north-east of Herat. Babar was more than eight hundred miles from Herat, when he received news of the death of the ruler of Herat, and the accession of two of his sons as joint rulers.

After a series of rapid marches Babar joined these young Persian princes in their camp on the river Murghab. They proved to be of too effeminate a type to please him, and he ascertained that while they had been enjoying themselves in their easy-going, luxurious way in camp, Shaibani, who was the only man he ever really stood in dread of, had captured Balkh: and he had good reason to dread him, for within a few months he had invaded Khorasan, had occupied Herat, and had established his influence at Kandahar. The winter was now approaching and Babar

determined to return to Kabul: before doing so, he was over-persuaded by the young princes to be their guest at Herat. He remained there for some three weeks, and the description of his visit takes up a very considerable portion of his memoirs. He was surprised at the profusion of rich dishes and varied wines at the banquets of his princely hosts, his orthodoxy was shocked, and he recorded his thoughts thus: 'My forefathers and family had always sacredly observed the rules of Chengiz. In their parties, their courts, their festivals, and their entertainments, in their up-rising and their down-sitting, they never acted contrary to the institutions of Chengiz.' Then he seems to have struck a more tolerant vein of thought, which was only natural for a youth of twenty-four, and he wrote:—'The institutions of Chengiz certainly possessed no divine authority, that a man should be compelled to conform to them; every man who has a good rule of conduct should follow it, and if the father has done what is wrong, the son should change it for what is right.' Though sorely tempted, he confesses, to break through his rule of strict temperance and abstention from intoxicating liquors, he did manage to resist the temptation, and it says something for his hosts that, when Babar's chief adviser, Kasim, a man of whom Babar held a very high opinion, remonstrated with them for putting temptation in his way, they carefully respected his scruples for the rest of his stay in the capital; their example, however, was not to be without its effect on Babar at a later period of his life.

One object, that Babar had in wishing to return to his own capital was that he might make his influence paramount in Kandahar. He left Herat for Kabul towards the end of December, 1506; a glance at the map will show the difficulties of a march across the mountains that lie between these two cities; in summer the march would be trying enough, and would take twenty days; its difficulties would be increased a hundredfold in the winter; and yet it was in the depths of winter that Babar undertook it. The march proved, indeed, to be one of terrible difficulty, 'such suffering and hardship indeed,' wrote Babar, 'as I have scarcely endured at any other time of my life.' Yet amidst

all his troubles he found time to compose an ode. It was one of Babar's great characteristics always to share in the sufferings of his followers, and various incidents occurred on the march, in which he acted as it was to be expected that such a man would act, sharing with his followers at all times all their dangers and difficulties. A favourite Persian proverb with him was one that runs: 'In the company of friends, death is a feast.' He risked his life more than once during this terrible journey for his men. But it was by such acts of comradeship and unselfish endurance at the risk of his life that Babar endeared himself to his soldiers. The account of one incident rings with all the sincerity and truth of simplicity, and is worthy of record here:

'For about a week we went on trampling down the snow, yet only able to make two or three miles. I helped in trampling the snow: I dismounted and laboured at beating down the snow: each step we sank to the waist or the breast, but still we went on trampling it down. In three or four days we reached a cave, when we reached the cave, the storm was at its worst. The cave seemed small; I took a hoe, and scraping and clearing the snow away, made a resting-place for myself as big as a prayer-carpet, near the mouth of the cave. I dug down, breast high, but did not reach the ground. In this hole I sat down for shelter from the gale. They begged me to go inside, but I would not. I felt that for me to be in warm shelter and comfort, whilst my men were out in the snow and drift, for me to be sleeping at ease inside, while my men were in misery or distress, was not to do my duty by them, or to share in their sufferings as they deserved that I should. Whatever their hardships and difficulties, whatever they had to undergo, it was right that I should share it with them. So I remained sitting in the drift, in the hole that I had dug out for myself, till bedtime prayers, when the snow fell so fast that I was covered with four inches of snow; that night I caught cold in the ear.'

His return to Kabul was timely; there had been a revolt, and the rebels under the leadership of a cousin were attacking the citadel which still held out. 'Opening communications with his partisans,' says Colonel Malleson,

'by a well-executed surprise he regained the place.' He behaved with characteristic generosity towards the rebels, and pardoned his cousin for his treachery, though he is said to have felt it deeply in his inmost heart.

But he had only rescued his kingdom from the traitorous members of his own household to find himself menaced by an expectant invasion of the Uzbeks, under their redoubtable chieftain, Shaibani, who had already ousted him from his former kingdoms of Ferghana and Samarcand. In the spring of the year that saw Babar reinstated at Kabul, Shaibani had conquered Herat, and was threatening Kandahar. The joint rulers of Kandahar at the time were the sons of the former governor who had held it for the Sultan of Herat: these princes had at first sought for Babar's assistance, but under pressure from Shaibani they had accepted his suzerainty, now that he in his turn was the ruler of Herat. Babar had already started for Kandahar: he received but a cool reception from its rulers, and they proceeded to notify to him the fact that they were now feudatories of Shaibani. What especially annoyed Babar was their use of terms in the letters they wrote to him notifying the fact, such as would be customary in the case of a superior addressing an inferior. This would be regarded as an unpardonable insult: it is a not uncommon custom among Orientals to this day, when they have a particular grudge against any one to adopt this method of making the retort discourteous. Babar, therefore, determined to try the arbitrament of war. The rulers of Kandahar unwisely came out to the attack, and were defeated, and before they could get back to the shelter of their walls, Babar was in the city. Beyond, however, the rich spoil which the place afforded, the expedition was fruitless. Babar then returned to Kabul where he arrived in July, 1507, 'with much plunder and great reputation.' The news that soon reached Kabul of the approach of the dreaded Uzbek chieftain caused a panic in the city, and Babar prepared for flight, but it was to be flight with a purpose: he knew he was not strong enough to hold Kabul against the Uzbeks, but he thought a counter-demonstration might draw them away both from Kabul and from Kandahar; he hesitated between making one

against Samarcand or against India. He had only gone a few marches when he heard that Kandahar had fallen to Shaibani, and that the Uzbeks had then given up their intention of attacking Kabul and had retired; he then returned to his capital to await a more favourable opportunity of advancing against India. Another revolt at Kabul occupied his attention: he was again successful in quelling it, and again he treated the rebels with generosity and consideration. Henceforth he styled himself Padishah, the Emperor. Babar ever treated with generosity and magnanimity all who fell into his hands, whether they had been conquered in the open field, or were defeated rebels. Among those who resorted to him for protection from the vengeance of Shaibani were many who were the sons and relatives of men who had at some time or other in his career dealt treacherously with him, but this made no difference to him: he treated all who sought his protection alike with consideration. Among these refugees was a boy of eight, who remained with him to the age of twelve: this was the future historian, Mirza Haidar, who has left on record his grateful recollection of the treatment accorded him by Babar; he ever regarded him, as many others did, as 'indeed a perfect host, and an incomparable friend'. Babar spent his time at Kabul at this period, for the next three years, in the usual punitive expeditions necessary in the times he lived in, in the delights of great hunting parties, and in his favourite pursuit of beautifying his capital by laying out gardens and parks. This latter has ever been a favourite occupation of noblemen and gentlemen in the East. An amusing illustration of an evasion of the payment of certain rates and dues by an Indian gentleman who had recently laid out such a garden round his mansion in the immediate vicinity of a large town, once came under the writer's own observation. It was claimed by this gentleman that as his gardens were an ornament to the town, he ought not to be called upon to pay for the water he consumed from the town supply to irrigate them. In the midst of his more or less peaceful occupations, Babar was suddenly called to action by important news that reached him from Central Asia of the Uzbeks being in difficulties. He was again inspired

with the dream of empire on the throne of Timur with Samarcand as his capital: and though it was mid-winter, and the passes blocked with snow, Babar determined to have another throw for the empire of Central Asia. He was spurred on, says his biographer, by

> Ambition, the desire of active souls,
> That pushes them beyond the bounds of nature,
> And elevates the hero to the Gods.

Babar was assisted in his new enterprise by the man he had so befriended in his boyhood, Mirza Haidar, and by his cousin, the Viceroy of Badakshan, and after a hard struggle, he again found himself on the throne of Samarcand. He entered the city in triumph in October, 1511. It is recorded that 'he was now content, he ruled from Tashkent to Kabul: he abandoned all thoughts of India, gave his little kingdom of Kabul to his brother, Nasir, and resolved henceforth to reign in Timur's seat on the imperial throne of Samarcand'. But his triumph was not to be for long: he found that he was only a vassal of the Persian ruler, Shah Ismail, who had been instrumental in the defeat and death of the great Uzbek chieftain, Shaibani, whose skull, set in gold, was now serving as the Shah's drinking-cup. He was obliged to conform in dress and in religious doctrine and ceremony to the rule of his suzerain, and this was distasteful to the people of Bokhara and Samarcand, for the Persians belonged to the Shiah sect of Muhammadanism, while they were mainly Sunnis. He soon lost the support of his subjects, and the Uzbeks returning forced him to abandon his newly found empire. After one attempt to recover it, he was finally defeated and driven southwards again, and returned to Kabul in the spring of 1514. His brother made no difficulty about resigning the sovereignty into Babar's hands again. He now again turned his eyes in the direction of India, but some years were to elapse before an opportunity presented itself of carrying out his design of winning on the plains of Hindustan the empire he had lost in Central Asia. He spent the interval in consolidating his own territories and in making his position secure in Afghanistan itself. He was called on to undertake several expeditions

against the hill tribes, and succeeded in securing the loyalty of the great clan of the Yusufzais by marrying a daughter of one of the chiefs, but not till after he had proved that he was their master by beating them in the open field. He secured also the submission of the rulers of Swat and Bajaur, and eventually incorporated Kandahar, and its dependencies, within his dominions. At a later period one of his adherents proclaimed him ruler of Sind, and, to ensure that it should be no form, caused the prayer for the sovereign, the Quranic Khatba, to be read in his name throughout that important province. Not till after the capture of Bajaur did Babar set himself to the steady realization of his dream of empire in India. After a long break he had again commenced writing his memoirs, and he made this entry : 'After the capture of Bajaur I specially devoted myself to the affairs of Hindustan, and in the space of seven or eight years I entered it five times at the head of an army. The fifth time God Most High of His mercy and grace cast down and defeated so powerful an enemy as Sultan Ibrahim and made me master and conqueror of the mighty empire of Hindustan.'

The first invasion of India by Babar took place in 1519, in which year he marched into the Punjab, which he claimed as his inheritance in right of Timur's conquest and occupation more than a century before. He seems also to have sent an ambassador to the King of Delhi to explain the situation, but the ambassador never got further than Lahore, where he was detained for a time and afterwards sent back to him. He then returned to Kabul. Between 1520 and 1524 he appears to have made two more incursions into the Punjab, but each time only to return to Kabul again. He spent the interval in strengthening his position, and securing the safety of the outlying portions of his dominions. It was during this period that he obtained final possession of Kandahar, and installed his son, Humayun, as Governor of Badakshan. He then in the year 1524 entered resolutely upon the campaign that ended in his conquest of Hindustan. What finally decided him to undertake his fourth expedition against India was a crisis that had arisen in the dominions subject to the sultan, Ibrahim Lodi, who then ruled at Delhi. Colonel

Malleson has thus written of this: 'When the crisis was extreme, Ala-ud-din, an uncle of Ibrahim Lodi, fled to the camp of Babar and implored him to place him on the throne of Delhi. Almost simultaneously there came to the King of Kabul a still more tempting offer from Daulat Khan, Governor of Lahore, who was hard pressed by Ibrahim's general, begging for assistance, and offering in return to acknowledge him as his sovereign.' This was too good an opportunity to be neglected, and Babar set off at once for Lahore. He defeated the troops of the House of Lodi when he was within ten miles of that fortress, and it fell into his possession. He then marched southwards where he was joined by Daulat Khan and his son. They were not satisfied with the minor fiefs he offered them, and left him, and at once commenced intriguing against him. Babar had almost reached Sirhind to the north of Delhi when he received the news of their treachery: this decided him for the time to retire from his venture, and he returned to Kabul once more. But it was to be retirement only in preparation for a more successful spring. He had left his generals in the Punjab and had only returned for reinforcements.

For the fifth and last time Babar set out from Kabul for India late in the year 1525. His determination this time to conquer or die in the attempt is given in his own words:—'I placed my foot in the stirrup of resolution and my hand on the reins of confidence in God.' On the Delhi side of the river Beas he encountered some 40,000 troops under his quondam ally Daulat Khan; that general had girded on two swords in token of his resolve to fight to the death, but his army broke and fled on Babar's approach, and Daulat Khan was compelled to surrender. As usual Babar spared his life, and after upbraiding him for his treachery, dispatched him to his village, but he died on his way there. Babar then continued his march till he reached the plains of Panipat, which were destined to be ever memorable in the history of India. He arrived at Panipat on April 12th, 1526. The great battle that was to give him India was fought on April 21st. In Babar's own words, 'The sun had mounted spear high when the onset began, and the battle lasted till midday, when the enemy were completely broken

and routed, and my people victorious and triumphant. By the grace and mercy of Almighty God this difficult affair was made easy to me, and that mighty army in the space of half a day was laid in the dust.' Babar followed up his great victory by dispatching troops to occupy Agra and Delhi. Ibrahim Lodi had been killed in the battle, fighting bravely, and by his death Babar had become Emperor of Delhi. Within a week of the great victory public prayers were being recited in the great mosque of the capital in the name of the new emperor, the first of the Mogul dynasty to find himself the master of Hindustan. Babar's son, Humayun, is said to have distinguished himself in the battle and he was handsomely rewarded. In celebration of the great victory a silver coin was sent to every person in Kabul; man, woman, and child, slave and free, young and old, all shared in the bounty of their emperor. It was a characteristic of Babar, as it has been of his successors, the British Rulers of India, not to keep in his own hands the spoils of victory. There is a story that Humayun offered him a very famous diamond presented to him by a great Hindu prince for his chivalrous protection on one occasion, but that he insisted on his son keeping it himself. His generosity, indeed, in distributing the great spoils of the Delhi kings gained him the sobriquet of Kalandar, the beggar friar. There are families in the central tracts of India that still bear this name. The historian well says of Babar, 'The fame and renown which he had now gained for all time was far above jewels and gold.'

Babar had a hard task, however, yet before him. He soon found that his victory at Panipat had only made him master of northern India, for the Lodi empire had already begun to break up, when he overthrew it altogether. The state of affairs in India at this time has been thus described by Colonel Malleson: 'The important provinces of Oudh, Jaunpur, and western Behar had revolted against Ibrahim, and though that prince had sent an army against the revolters it seemed but too certain that the two parties would make common cause against the new invader. Then Bengal, under its king, Nasrat Shah, Guzerat under Sikandar Shah: and Malwa under Sultan Mahmud, were three powerful and independent kingdoms. A portion of Malwa indeed had

been reconquered by the renowned Hindu prince, Rana Sanga. In the south of India, too, the Bahmanis had established a kingdom, and the Raja of Vijayanagar exercised independent authority. There were, moreover, a considerable number of Rais, and Rajas, who had never submitted to Muhammadan kings. But Babar's greatest difficulty arose from the fact that the Hindu population, never conciliated by the families which had preceded his own, were hostile to the invader. 'The north of India,' writes Erskine, 'still retained much of its Hindu organization: its system of village and district administration and government; its division into numerous little chieftainships, or petty local governments; and in political revolutions, the people looked much more to their own immediate rulers than to the prince who governed in the capital.' In a word, never having realized the working of a well-ordered system, emanating from one all-powerful centre, they regarded the latest conqueror as an intruder whom it might be their interest to oppose. To add to Babar's difficulties his own troops soon began to murmur; one of his best generals, moreover, Khwaja Kalan, whose six brothers had all been killed in his service, was eager to return home. Babar had already had reason for being offended with Khwaja, because of certain lines he had written on the walls of Delhi, which pointed to his longing for the cooler air of Kabul. Babar sent him as Governor of Ghazni, hoping that in the intense cold of a winter there, he might come to regret the heat of India; and to the troops who murmured he said: 'Let no man who calls himself my friend ever suggest such a thing as flight to Kabul. But if there is any among you who cannot bring himself to stay or to give up his purpose of returning back, let him depart.' His firmness and resolution prevailed not only with his own troops but with the people of the country round about; as soon as these realized that his occupancy was likely to be permanent, they recognized, as Orientals are quick to do, on which side their interests lay, which was that on which, in the picturesque language of a recent writer, 'the sun of success was shining.' The army, moreover, that had been dispatched to deal with the rebels of Jaunpur and Oudh, declared for him, and he soon began to strengthen his position and

extend his influence. By the spring of 1527 he had made himself master of the country from the Indus to the frontiers of western Behar, and from Kalpi and Gwalior to the Himalayas. His son Humayun had been employed in completing the subjection of the eastern frontiers of the empire. Colonel Malleson has recorded an interesting note inserted by Humayun in his father's memoirs bearing on an incident that took place during this campaign. 'At the station of Shahabad the razor or scissors were first applied to Humayun's beard. As my honoured father mentioned in these commentaries the time of his first using the razor, in humble emulation of him I have commemorated the same circumstance regarding myself. I was then eighteen years of age. Now that I am forty-six, I, Muhammad Humayun, am transcribing a copy of these memoirs from the copy in his late Majesty's own handwriting.'

Babar knew what he had to expect in his struggle with the great Rajput chieftain, Rana Sanga, and he made every preparation for it. The chieftain's personal appearance was in thorough keeping with his reputation for prowess and courage. It has been recorded that he exhibited at his death but the fragment of a warrior; one eye had been lost in a broil with his brother; an arm in an action with the Lodi king of Delhi; and he was a cripple owing to a limb being broken with a cannon-ball in another engagement; while he counted eighty wounds on various parts of his body. 'Each of these great men,' says the historian, 'Babar, the Turco-Mongolian of western Tartary, Sanga, the pure Aryan of the East, recognized the greatness of his rival, for, as the poet says :—

> There is neither East nor West,
> Border, nor breed, nor birth,
> When two strong men stand face to face,
> Though they come from the ends of the earth.'

Babar halted in his march against this redoubtable chieftain at Sikri, not far from Agra, a place where his grandson Akbar afterwards built himself a magnificent palace, and renamed it Fatehpur Sikri, a name which it keeps to this day. While the two armies were facing each other, Babar, says Colonel Malleson, passed in review the events of his

life and recognized with humility and penitence that throughout it he had habitually violated one of the strictest injunctions of the Quran, that which forbids the drinking of wine. He resolved at once to amend; sending for his golden wine-cups and his silver goblets, he had them destroyed in his presence, and gave the proceeds of the sale of the precious metal to the poor. Three hundred of his nobles followed his example, and all the wine in the camp was poured out upon the earth. As a matter of fact, as already stated, Babar had resisted the temptation to drink wine when at Herat, only to fall a victim to it in Bajaur in the year 1519. He had intended to leave off the habit when he was forty: he had reached that age in 1522, but he had not then left it off; again in 1525 he had fallen seriously ill, and proceeded in his alarm to make many serious resolutions, and he entered this record in his memoirs:—'I knew whence this illness proceeded, and what conduct had brought on this chastisement, and I now once more composed myself to penitence and self-control.' Only now, on the eve of his great struggle with the Rajput chivalry did he finally break himself of the habit. An almshouse was built on the site where he carried into effect his great vow of renunciation, and still further to signalize his reformation, he remitted the stamp tax for all Muhammadans throughout his dominions. The night before the battle Babar is said to have delivered a stirring address to his troops, in which these words occurred: 'Rather let us die with honour, than live disgraced.' The whole army responded to his appeal; the result was a decisive victory for Babar, and Rajputana submitted to his arms. Rana Sanga was severely wounded, and 'the choicest chieftains of his army were slain'. The Rana himself died the same year. Babar continued his victorious career, and after having conquered Central India, and having reoccupied Lucknow, he returned for a time to Agra, with the view of consolidating what he had gained.

Babar, however, had now to encounter a formidable conspiracy formed against him among the Muhammadan nobles of Jaunpur and Behar, who had agreed together to place supreme authority over those provinces in the hands of a prince of the House of Lodi, Mahmud Lodi. One of

Babar's own generals, moreover, Sher Khanhadd, joined this prince. Babar at once set out from Agra in the spring of 1529, and succeeded in driving the Afghans before him till he reached Arrah, where he assumed the sovereignty of Behar. Mahmud Lodi took refuge with the Afghan ruler of Bengal, Nasrat Shah. Babar had had no quarrel with this ruler, and had indeed at one time made a convention with him that neither prince was to invade the territories of the other, but notwithstanding this, Nasrat Shah had occupied one of the districts of Behar, and had taken up a strong position at the junction of the Gogra and the Ganges. By a skilful combination, in the course of the execution of which he himself crossed the Ganges, Babar defeated the Bengal army decisively. He then concluded a Treaty with Nasrat Shah. This victory was the last military exploit of his life, and soon afterwards he returned to Agra. One incident that happened on his return journey is worthy of record : he was writing one day in his tent when a violent storm blew the tent down over his head so suddenly that he had not time to gather up his papers : 'these soon became drenched, but they were collected together again very carefully, folded in woollen cloths, and placed under some bedding over which carpets were thrown to dry and press them.' These sheets of paper collected with such care and solicitude were the pages of his world-famous memoirs, much of which was written in the intervals of his campaigns. His son Humayun was at this time Governor of Badakshan, and Babar had employed some of his scanty leisure in writing letters to him : these were always full of sound advice such as a young prince might well have needed ; they contained not only instruction in military matters, but one or two of them might well have been styled 'The Complete Letter-writer' : Humayun was instructed in them to correct his faults of bad handwriting, and ambiguous wording : thus Babar wrote to him : 'You have indeed written me letters, but you certainly never read them over : had you attempted to do so you would have found it impossible. Write unaffectedly, clearly, with plain words, which saves trouble to both writer and reader.' Not a few who have had to experience similar difficulties in reading letters, official and private,

will appreciate Babar's excellent advice in this respect. Babar's health had begun to suffer from the hardships he had gone through, and his own disregard of all the laws of health; his son Humayun had heard of this, and he hastened to join his father at Agra, where he was received most affectionately. Babar has left a pleasing portrait of the young prince in these terms : 'His conversation has an inexpressible charm, and he realized absolutely the ideal of perfect manhood.'

It is in connexion with Humayun that one of the most pathetic stories in the whole region of history has been recorded. Not long after his return to Agra he had fallen very seriously ill, and his life was despaired of. The story as told by Colonel Malleson thus runs : 'When all hopes from medicine were over, and whilst several men of skill were talking to the emperor of the melancholy situation of his son, Abul Baka, a personage highly venerated for his knowledge and piety, remarked to Babar that in such a case the Almighty had sometimes vouchsafed to receive the most valuable thing possessed by one friend as an offering in exchange for the life of another. Babar exclaimed that of all things his life was dearest to Humayun, as Humayun's was to him ; that his life therefore he most cheerfully devoted as a sacrifice for that of his son, and prayed the Most High to vouchsafe to accept it.' Vainly did his courtiers remonstrate. He persisted, we are told, in his resolution : walked thrice round the dying prince—a solemnity similar to that used by Muhammadans in sacrifices—and retiring, prayed earnestly. After a time he was heard to exclaim : 'I have borne it away. I have borne it away.' The Muhammadan historians relate that almost from that moment Humayun began to recover, and the strength of Babar began proportionately to decay. He died on December 26th, 1530, in the forty-ninth year of his age. He was buried at Kabul, in the garden on the hill which he had himself chosen for his last resting-place. The historian has recorded that people still flock to the spot, and offer up prayers at the simple mosque, which an august descendant built in memory of 'The Founder of the Mogul Empire of India'.

Death makes no conquest of this Conqueror,
For now he lives in Fame.

Colonel Malleson has well said of Babar: 'Amongst the famous conquerors of the world Babar will always occupy a very high place. His character created his career. Inheriting but the shadow of a small kingdom in Central Asia he died master of the territories lying between the Karamnasa and the Oxus, and those between the Nerbudda and the Himalayas. His nature was a joyous nature. Generous, confiding, always hopeful, he managed to attract the attention of all with whom he came in contact. He was keenly sensitive to all that was beautiful in nature: had cultivated his own remarkable talents to a degree quite unusual in the age in which he lived; and was gifted with strong affections and a very vivid imagination. He loved war and glory, but he did not neglect the arts of peace. He made it a duty to inquire into the condition of the races whom he subdued, to devise for them ameliorating measures. He was fond of gardening, of architecture, of music, and he was no mean poet. But the greatest glory of his character was that attributed to him by one who knew him well, and who thus recorded his opinion in Tarikhi Reshidi: "Of all his qualities," wrote Mirza Haidar, "his generosity and humanity took the lead." Though he lived long enough only to conquer, and not long enough to consolidate, the task of conquering could hardly have been committed to hands more pure.'

CHAPTER III

AKBAR AND THE RISE OF THE MOGUL EMPIRE, 1542–1605

COLONEL MALLESON, in his most interesting monograph on Akbar, has shown how necessary it is for a right appreciation of the reign of that great emperor to know something about the system of rule that had prevailed in India before his time under the Muhammadan dynasties that had ruled from Delhi. Akbar's grandfather, Babar, originally conceived the idea of a great Mogul empire in India, but he was regarded always, both by his rivals and by the people of the country, as a conqueror and nothing more. The only system of administration that he knew of was that which had also satisfied his Afghan predecessors, the system of governing by means of large camps. Into such a system, as Colonel Malleson says, 'the welfare of the children of the soil did not enter.' The foundations of an empire constituted on these lines must have been unstable indeed : for it neither rested in the hearts of the people, nor was it 'broad-based upon the people's will '. This was especially illustrated under Babar's son and successor, Humayun. He possessed many excellent qualities, but he was wanting in those that especially characterize the great administrator. Colonel Malleson has said of him : 'His character, flighty and unstable, and his abilities wanting in the constructive faculty, alike unfitted him for the duty. He ruled eight years in India without contributing a single stone to the foundation of an empire that was to remain. When, at the end of that period, his empire fell, as had fallen the kingdoms of his Afghan predecessors, and from the same cause, the absence of any roots in the soil, the result of a single defeat in the field, he lost, at one blow, all that Babar had gained south of the Indus. India disappeared apparently for ever from

the grasp of the Mogul.' Again he was succeeded for a time by a ruler, who, though a man of great ability, still held the same views that his Afghan ancestors had held on the system of administration best suited for a conquered country, and the system of governing by camps continued. The conciliation of the millions of Hindustan entered not into this system. Sher Khan Sur's death again was the signal for a general scramble, in the midst of which Humayun succeeded in recovering his own again, but adversity had taught him no lessons, and he proved as unfit as ever to found a stable empire. 'Just before his death,' says Colonel Malleson, 'he drew up a system for the administration of India. It was the old system of separate camps in a fixed centre, each independent of the other, but all supervised by the emperor. It was an excellent plan, doubtless, for securing conquered provinces, but it was absolutely deficient in any scheme for welding the several provinces and their people into one harmonious whole.' But Humayun rendered one inestimable service to India: he left behind him a son who was destined to take rank as one of the mightiest and at the same time most beneficent rulers that the world has ever seen. Akbar was a boy of fourteen when his father died. They are noble words in which Colonel Malleson introduces him: 'This boy possessed among other great talents the genius of construction. During the few years that he allowed his famous general to govern in his name, he pondered deeply over the causes which had rendered evanescent all the preceding dynasties, which had prevented them from taking root in the soil. When he had matured his plans, he took the government into his own hands, and founded a dynasty which flourished so long as it adhered to his system, and which began to decay only when it departed from one of its main principles, the principle of toleration and conciliation.'

In any sketch of the careers of distinguished men, it is always of interest to know something of the special characteristics of their immediate forbears, as in these will often be found the key-note of a proper appreciation of their own characters. The account that will be found in this series of sketches of Rulers of India of Akbar's

grandfather, Babar, will sufficiently show what manner of man he was. Colonel Malleson has given an interesting sketch of Humayun, the father of Akbar: 'Brave, genial, witty, a charming companion, highly educated, generous, and merciful, Humayun was even less qualified than his father to found a dynasty on principles which should endure. Allied to his many virtues were many compromising defects. He was volatile, thoughtless, and unsteady. He was swayed by no strong sense of duty. His generosity was apt to degenerate into prodigality: his attachments into weakness. He was unable to concentrate his energies for a time in any serious direction, whilst for comprehensive legislation he had neither the genius nor the inclination. He was thus eminently unfitted to consolidate the conquest his father had bequeathed to him.' It was a fortunate thing both for his own reputation and for the country whose destinies he was to rule over, that Akbar inherited the good qualities of his father and his grandfather without their defects. Many were to be the adventures and vicissitudes of fortune that he was destined to meet with before he succeeded to his father's throne. It was in the spring of 1540 that Humayun was driven from his throne by the sword of the conqueror, Sher Khan Sur, an Afghan nobleman who had submitted to his father, but had risen against the son. He was in the province of Sind, striving vainly to establish his sovereignty there, when, on the 15th of October, 1542, his wife gave birth to a son, to whom he gave the name of Jalal-ud-din Muhammad Akbar. Humayun was not present at the time, and the news was conveyed to him. The story has been thus recorded: 'As soon as the emperor had finished his thanksgivings to God, the amirs were introduced and offered their congratulations. He then called to him the historian, Jouher, and asked what he had committed to his charge. Jouher replied that all he had left was a musk-bag. On this Humayun ordered the musk-bag to be brought, and having broken it on a china plate, he called his nobles, and divided it among them, as the royal present in honour of his son's birth.' 'This event,' adds the historian, 'diffused its fragrance over the whole habitable world.' Within a few months Humayun was in

flight again, and finding himself on the point of being captured by one of his brothers, Askari Mirza, who was in pursuit, he and his wife decided to leave the child with his nurses behind them, trusting that the uncle would not wage war against his infant nephew. Their trust was repaid, as Askari treated his nephew affectionately and taking him to Kandahar, of which place he was governor, left him in charge of his own wife, allowing the ladies who had hitherto been the child's nurses to remain in attendance. He remained at Kandahar the whole of 1544. Another of Humayun's brothers, Kamran, was ruling at Kabul and he now gave orders that the young prince should be placed with him. The boy was taken to Kabul in the spring of 1545, and was placed for a short period in the special charge of his grandfather's favourite sister, the Khanzada Begam. She, as might have been expected of the sister of a man like Babar, was a high-minded and kindly old lady, and she treated the boy prince, it is said, with the tenderest care and affection. Towards the end of 1545 Humayun succeeded in recovering Kabul and with it the person of his son. He then set out to spend the winter in the province of Badakshan, but was seized with so severe an illness that his life was despaired of, and his brother, Kamran, saw his opportunity and again became master of Kabul. Akbar again fell into his hands: and it was now, when Humayun had sufficiently recovered to attempt to regain possession of his capital that the incident occurred that Abulfazl has recorded in the Akbarnama. Kamran had found the fire of Humayun's bombardment so hot that he threatened to expose the young prince on the walls where it was hottest, unless Humayun ordered it to cease, and he actually did so expose him, till Humayun gave the required order. Humayun, however, continued the siege and eventually, in the spring of 1547, entered the city a conqueror. Once more he left it, and again Kamran occupied it, and made Akbar, whom Humayun had left as governor, his prisoner. Once more, and this time finally, Humayun recovered his capital and his son; his position in Kabul was soon secure: he had no further trouble from his brothers, who were both sent on the holy pilgrimage to Mecca, which in those days was tantamount

to perpetual banishment, and there they died. By 1554, Humayun had completed the consolidation of his dominions in Afghanistan, and had built himself a strong fort at Peshawar ready for the time when it would be possible for him to make an attempt, with some chance of success, to recover his lost empire in Hindustan.

The Afghan prince, Sher Shah, who had defeated Humayun at Kanauj, in 1540, and who succeeded for a time to the empire which Babar had founded, but Humayun had been unable to keep, had been a strong ruler, and he had made his power sufficiently felt to enable his son, who succeeded him on his death in 1545, to reign without being overthrown for a period of some eight years. This son, known as Sultan Islam, had, however, suffered from the intrigues of the different nobles who held power under him over the provinces of the empire. When he died, leaving an infant son, these intrigues came to a head. The young prince was murdered and his maternal uncle, Muhammad Shah Adel, usurped the throne. But there were many other claimants, and in the confusion that arose one Ahmad Khan became for a time practically supreme, and proclaimed himself emperor under the title of Sikandar Shah. Humayun now seized his opportunity: accompanied by Akbar, he marched into India late in the year 1554. He had no great difficulty in defeating Sikandar Shah, and he was soon in occupation of Delhi. Akbar was dispatched to the Punjab to settle matters there, and was accompanied by the famous general, Bairam Khan, who was also his Atalik (or guardian). He had barely reached his objective when the news reached him of a serious accident that had befallen his father, who had fallen from the top of the staircase leading on to the terraced roof of his library. The first courier that arrived brought a dispatch drafted by Humayun's express orders giving hopes of his speedy recovery. He had barely taken his departure when another arrived bringing the intelligence of Humayun's death. Humayun died on January 24, 1556, being only forty-eight years of age. It appears that the Governor of Delhi, Tardi Beg Khan, had taken that prompt action that is nowhere more necessary than in the East to secure the interests of the youthful

Akbar. He at once assumed the general direction of affairs, and took special care to conceal the news from the public until he could arrange to make the succession secure. Colonel Malleson records that by an ingenious stratagem he managed to conceal the death of the emperor for seventeen days. Then, when he thought the time ripe, he repaired with the nobles to the great mosque and caused the prayer for the emperor to be recited in the name of Akbar. His next act was to dispatch the insignia of the empire with the Crown jewels, accompanied by the officers of the household, the Imperial Guards, and a possible rival to the throne in the person of a son of Humayun's brother, Kamran, to the head quarters of the new emperor in the Punjab. Akbar was a boy only a little over thirteen when he succeeded to his inheritance : and before he was a few days older the most important part of that inheritance had slipped from his grasp. He was soon to find himself, like his father and grandfather before him, in the position of a king seeking his own again.

The task that now confronted him was no light one. Already Kabul had revolted and the great cities of Delhi and Agra were threatened by his enemies. If he himself was fortunate in having on his side a great general in Bairam Khan, his enemies were equally fortunate in possessing a general almost as great on their side in Hemu. This man's career was a curious one : he was a Hindu and had originally been a shopkeeper of Rewari, a town of Mewat : he had attached himself to the cause of Muhammad Shah Adel when that prince usurped the throne, and being possessed of remarkable talents he soon rose to a high position in the State, and became practically all-powerful. He was now the general and chief minister of Muhammad Shah, and was making a determined effort to recover Agra and Delhi for his master. In this he eventually succeeded : and Akbar soon found that he was master only of the Sirhind province of the Punjab, and that he would have to fight to recover his rightful dominions, and that too against tremendous odds. When Delhi fell into the hands of Hemu, Akbar realized that a crisis had arrived : and he convened a council of war. This council was as historic as was that which Clive convened

some two centuries later on the eve of the battle of Plassey, and its proceedings were of somewhat similar a character; the same crucial question was discussed: 'Was it to be advance or retreat?' All Akbar's counsellors but one favoured the latter; they urged him to fall back upon Kabul. The one who gave his voice in favour of an immediate advance on Delhi was Bairam Khan; and his voice, coinciding as it did with the military instincts of Akbar, prevailed: and from that time forward Advance was to be the watchword of the army of Akbar, until its commander had achieved the object with which he had set it in motion, the wresting from the hands of usurpers of an empire of which he knew himself to be the rightful heir. Then, but not till then, would he be prepared to exchange the sword for the pen, and the camp of the conqueror for the council-chamber of the administrator. All preparations were made for the great encounter on the plains of Panipat, where again it was to be decided who was to be master of India. Hemu appears to have made the great mistake of dispatching all his artillery in advance to Panipat, unsupported by his infantry and cavalry, with whom he himself marched shortly after. Akbar had a famous cavalry general with him, Ali Kuli Khan; this officer made a sudden swoop on the guns with ten thousand horsemen, and captured them all. Akbar at once created him a Khan Zaman and he is known in history by this name. Hemu is said to have been much depressed by this misfortune, for the guns are recorded to have been obtained from Turkey, and were regarded with great reverence. However, he decided to give battle, and on the 5th of November, 1556, the two armies came into collision. History has recorded the result. Colonel Malleson has well said: 'The battle, Akbar knew, would be the decisive battle of the century. But, prescient as he was, he could not foresee that it would prove the starting-point for the establishment in India of a dynasty which would last for more than two hundred years, and would then require another invasion from the north, and another battle of Panipat to strike it down; the advent of another race of foreigners from an island in the Atlantic to efface it.' An incident that took place during the retreat of Hemu's grand army

illustrates the generosity towards the conquered that was as characteristic a trait of Akbar as it had been of his renowned grandfather. Hemu had been captured by one of Akbar's officers as he was leaving the field: this man had stopped an elephant that had lost its mahout as it was making off instinctively for the jungles: a wounded man was seated on it: this proved to be Hemu. He was at once conducted to Bairam Khan, and by him he was taken into the presence of Akbar. The scene that followed has been thus described: 'Bairam said to his master, as he presented to him the wounded general: "This is your first war: prove your sword on this infidel, for it will be a meritorious deed." Akbar replied: "He is now no better than a dead man; how can I strike him? If he had sense and strength I would try my sword."' The story goes that Bairam Khan, more ruthless and less generous to a fallen foe, himself then cut the prisoner down. On the day after this great victory, the army of Akbar entered Delhi, and Akbar knew himself to be an emperor indeed.

The personal appearance of the new Ruler of India has been thus described by his son, afterwards the Emperor Jahangir: 'Akbar was of middling stature, but with a tendency to be tall: he had a wheat-coloured complexion, rather inclining to be dark than fair, black eyes and eyebrows, stout body, open forehead and chest, long arms and hands. There was a fleshy wart, about the size of a small pea, on the left side of his nose, which appeared exceedingly beautiful, and which was considered very auspicious by physiognomists, who said that it was a sign of immense riches, and increasing prosperity. He had a very loud voice and a very elegant and pleasant way of speech. His manners and habits were quite different from those of other persons, and his visage was full of godly dignity.' But more important even than his personal appearance, at any rate in the eyes of those over whom he was to rule, were his personal qualities. With the great physical energy and bodily activity that had characterized his grandfather, he had inherited also his kindly and generous nature. He is said to have been capable of enduring great fatigue, and to have been very fond of riding, walking,

shooting, or hunting, and indeed of all exercises requiring strength and skill. He was especially fond of the game known in his days as chaugan, the modern polo, and he is said to have devised a method of playing it on the dark nights that come on so suddenly in India when once the sun has gone down. He had balls made of the wood of the palas tree, the *Butea frondosa* of botanists, whose profusion of scarlet flowers forms to this day one of the ornaments of great expanses of country in the neighbourhood of the old battle-field of Plassey, which, indeed, takes its name from this tree. These balls were set on fire, and as they retained their glow for a considerable time, the game was able to proceed without interruption till well after it was dark. Colonel Malleson says that Akbar had the reputation of being the keenest chaugan player of his time. But these amusements were merely his recreations in the intervals of work, and were not allowed to interfere with the duties and responsibilities of his high position. He proved that he possessed the highest qualities fitting him for the threefold task that he had before him of conquest, consolidation, and administration. With all his liberality and breadth of view Akbar appears to have been not altogether free from superstition. He believed in lucky days: and his courtiers are said to have attributed much of his success to luck. But, as Colonel Malleson has well said: 'It was his remarkable attention to the carrying out of the details of laws and regulations which he and his councillors had thoroughly considered which ensured his success.' One of Akbar's most pleasing traits was his affection for his relatives. He was once called upon to inflict a punishment upon a foster-brother who had persistently offended him; and it is recorded that when inflicting the lightest punishment upon him he remarked: 'Between me and Aziz is a river of milk, which I cannot cross.' In all his domestic relations indeed he has the reputation of having been 'a good son, a loving husband, and perhaps too affectionate a father'. He was absolutely sincere himself and hated above all things any hypocrisy in others: he is said to have especially detested a certain class among his co-religionists known as the 'Ulama, or learned doctors', whom he regarded as

pharisaical; and he was not altogether sorry to be in a position at a later period of his reign of resuming certain blocks of land to which some of this class had been helping themselves during his minority, and of exiling the holders to Bengal, which then had, even more than it does now, the reputation of being one of the most unhealthy regions of India. The lesson he wished to give them is contained in a famous utterance he once made in the course of one of the great discussions on Theology that he delighted in: 'Obedience is not in prostration on the earth: practise sincerity, for righteousness is not borne upon the brow.'

Akbar had undoubtedly owed much to his early training under his famous Atalik, Bairam Khan, who, with all his faults, must still be recognized as a great and high-minded man. Bairam, like not a few other guardians of youth possessed of a masterful personality, had failed to take note of the rapid development of the latent qualities of his pupil, and a time soon came when Akbar resented the control of a director and when he determined to stand forth as master in his own house. Accordingly, in the year 1560, when he was just eighteen, the age at which, even under British rule, princes who have shown their competence are placed in charge of the government of their States, Akbar informed his guardian that his services were no longer required, and knowing that Bairam Khan had long been contemplating the holy pilgrimage, he suggested the desirability of his now availing himself of the opportunity to carry his wishes into effect. The entire message was characteristic of Akbar, and may be quoted here: 'As I was fully assured of your honesty and fidelity, I left all important affairs of State to your charge, and thought only of my own pleasures. I have now determined to take the reins of government into my own hands, and it is desirable that you should now make the pilgrimage to Mecca, upon which you have been so long intent. A suitable jaghir out of the parganas of Hindustan shall be assigned to your maintenance, the revenues of which shall be transmitted to you by your agents.' But Bairam had other plans: he had been presuming on his influence over Akbar, and he had fully expected to be allowed to retain

his position. He was made intensely angry, it is recorded, by the receipt of the message, and he soon broke out openly into rebellion. He was defeated in the open field by one of Akbar's governors: and being pursued by Akbar himself, surrendered and threw himself on his mercy: that mercy was never entreated in vain. Akbar pardoned him, and furnishing him with abundant resources, sent him on his way to Mecca. He was on the point of leaving India when an Afghan who had a vendetta against him assassinated him. The pilot had been dropped, and the destinies of the vessel of State now depended upon the genius and capacity for command of the sovereign alone, but that sovereign was to prove himself fully equal to the responsibility.

Great were the problems that now confronted Akbar: they were of a physical as well as of a moral character, as Colonel Malleson has well shown, and the writer cannot do better than quote what that able historian has written: 'There can be little doubt that during the five years of his tutelage under Bairam, Akbar had deeply considered the question of how to govern India so as to unite the hearts of the princes and people under the protecting arm of a sovereign whom they should regard as national. The question was encumbered with difficulties. Four centuries of the rule of Muhammadan sovereigns who had made no attempt to cement into one bond of mutual interests the various races who inhabited the peninsula, each ruling on the principle of temporary sovereignty, each falling as soon as a greater power presented itself, had not only introduced a conviction of the ephemeral character of the successive dynasties, and of the actual dynasty for the time being, it had also left scattered all over the country a number of pretenders, every one of whom regarded the Mogul as being only a temporary occupant of the supreme seat of power, to be replaced as fortune might direct, possibly by one of themselves, possibly by a new invader. These were facts which Akbar had recognized. The problem to his mind was how to act so as to efface from the minds of princes and people these recollections; to conquer that he might unite; to introduce, as he conquered, principles so acceptable to all classes, to the prince as well as to the

peasant, that they should combine to regard him as the protecting father, the unit necessary to ward off from them evil, the assurer to them of their immemorial rights and privileges, the asserter of the right of the ablest, independently of his religion, or his caste, or his nationality, to exercise command under himself, the maintainer of equal laws, equal justice for all classes. Such became, as his mind developed, the principles of Akbar.' It was the physical aspect of the problem that he was first to consider. His first aim was to bring all India under one sceptre: he realized, as the British were to realize two centuries later, the absolute necessity for a country like India with its diverse races, of one supreme Power controlling from a centre the destinies of the whole empire.

It is impossible within the short compass of this sketch to give the conquests of Akbar in detail, suffice it to say that, while at his accession he exercised an authority which was not altogether undisputed over an inconsiderable portion of northern India, at his death he exercised a sway which was supreme and undisputed over an empire extending on the north to Kashmir, on the west to Kabul, on the south to Ahmadnagar, and on the east to Assam. A consideration of the principles that actuated him in his career of conquest will explain much of his success. Colonel Malleson has shown what his leading principle was: 'His design was to unite, to weld together. Hence he was always generous to the vanquished. He would bring their strength into his strength, instead of allowing it to become a strength outside his own. He would make those who would in the first instance be inclined to resist him feel that conquest by him, or submission to him, would in no way impair their dignity, but ultimately would increase it.' This was especially illustrated in the case of the dispossessed Afghan Governor of Malwa, who had taken advantage of the departure of Akbar's generals from that province to join in a combined movement against the imperial forces, which he had defeated and so had recovered the province. It was, however, again wrested from him by the Mogul generals, and the governor, as the native chronicler has it, 'sought a refuge from the frowns of fortune,' by throwing himself upon the mercy of Akbar.

He was made a commander of one thousand, and then of two thousand horse, and died in the service of his sovereign. Another trait that distinguished Akbar was his chivalry: this is well illustrated in a story told in connexion with his bringing some Guzerati rebels to book. He had at the time a much smaller force with him than the rebels had, but it was composed of the flower of the army all actuated by the same high spirit that animated their commander. Akbar had made one of those rapid marches for which he was famous, his mount being often the swift dromedary of the desert, and had come suddenly upon the rebels as they were still sleeping in their tents near Ahmadabad. The incident has thus been related by the native historian: 'The feeling ran through the royal ranks that it was unmanly to fall upon an enemy unawares, and they decided to wait until he was roused. The trumpeters were therefore ordered to sound. The chief rebel leader whose spies had informed him that, fourteen days before, the emperor was at Agra, still declared his belief that the horsemen before him could not belong to the royal army as there were no elephants with them—as a general rule the presence of elephants in an army indicated the presence of the emperor, and similarly their absence usually indicated that he was not present. However, he prepared for battle: the emperor, still chivalrous, waited till he was ready, then dashed into and crossed the river, formed on the opposite bank and charged the enemy like a fierce tiger. The shock was irresistible. The rebels were completely defeated, and their leader taken prisoner.' Some of Akbar's generals were equally anxious with their master to avoid the final arbitrament of war, if there was any chance of the required end being obtained by peaceful means, but others were not so minded, and a curious incident has been related which not only brings out this fact, but also serves to illustrate Akbar's magnanimity and utter inability to harbour any feeling of revenge or vindictiveness. The forces of the Jaunpur rebels were encountered one day by one of the imperial armies commanded by a general who was anxious, if possible, to arrive at a bloodless termination to the dispute. He had almost concluded his peaceful negotiations, when another

imperial army arrived commanded by a general of a more fiery and impetuous temper: he declared the negotiations to be a fraud and insisted on fighting, with the result that the imperial forces were defeated. Akbar had already confirmed the peace negotiations with the rebels, and he was not moved from his resolution when he heard of their victory over his army. He said: 'Their faults have been forgiven.' It is recorded that they again broke out, but again Akbar received them back into favour, but only after he had thrashed them soundly.

In many other respects Akbar's methods of making war presented a marked contrast to those of his predecessors, and indeed his progenitors. This was illustrated in the special precautions he always took that the interests of the cultivators of the soil should not suffer from the movements of his armies. Herein he displayed not only his care and thoughtful consideration for the feelings of others, but his shrewdness: nowhere in the world perhaps do the cultivating classes attach greater importance to the protection of their crops from damage, especially damage caused by human agency, than in India. The writer once had a somewhat amusing illustration of this in his own experience. He was engaged one day in trying to rid the countryside of a party of four leopards that had taken up their abode in some dense thorny jungle bordering on the high road. On one side of this jungle was a very small patch of cultivated land sown with rice, which was just springing up. In the course of his operations the writer had occasion to cross this patch, and though he offered full compensation for any damage he might cause, the owner was very indignant, and though the writer informed him that he thought he might be doing a public service in getting rid of the leopards, the man only exclaimed: 'What do I care for the leopards: they don't eat my rice!' With the object of carrying out this principle of preventing any injury to the interests of the cultivators, Akbar, says Colonel Malleson, 'ordered that when a particular plot of ground was decided upon as an encampment, orderlies should be posted to protect the cultivated ground in its vicinity. He further appointed assessors whose duty it should be to examine the encamping ground after the army

had left it, and to place the amount of any damage done against the government claim for revenue. The historian of the Tabakat-i-Akbari adds that this practice became a rule in all his campaigns; and sometimes even bags of money were given to these inspectors, so that they might at once estimate and satisfy the claims of the ryots and the farmers, and obviate any interference with the revenue collectors.' No better plan could possibly have been adopted for conciliating a class that must always, in an agricultural country like India, form the backbone of the administration of the empire. It is a marvellously patient and long-suffering class, and one that, though it may not voice its gratitude, does feel and appreciate any efforts on the part of the ruling race to advance its interests or alleviate its distresses. The writer had an opportunity of witnessing a conspicuous display of fortitude on the part of the agricultural community in the central tracts of India on the occasion of their first experience of their dreaded enemy, drought, and its still more dreaded concomitant, famine, after a long immunity from these scourges extending over more than three decades. It was a veritable exhibition of what a great modern preacher has styled, 'the invincible grace of dignity, patience, and hope.' The dignity and the patience were innate; hope had been implanted in their breasts by their confidence in the kindly beneficence of their British Rulers, which they well knew had hitherto never failed them in their seasons of trouble. It is no wonder that with such principles actuating him, the career of Akbar as a conqueror should have been a success.

The same principles actuated him in his task of consolidation; the secret of his success in this direction has been revealed by Colonel Malleson, who has thus written: 'The princes of India recognized in Akbar the founder of a set of principles such as had never been heard of before in India. In his eyes merit was merit, whether evinced by a Hindu prince, or by an Uzbek Muhammadan. The race and creed of the meritorious man barred neither his employment in high positions nor his rise to honour. Hence, men like Bhagwan Das, Man Singh, Todar Mull, and others, found that they enjoyed a consideration under this Muhammadan sovereign far greater and wider-reaching than that

which would have accrued to them as independent rulers of their ancestral dominions. They governed imperial provinces and commanded imperial armies. They were admitted to the closest councils of the prince whose main object was to obliterate all the dissensions and prejudices of the past, and without diminishing the real power of the local princes who entered into his scheme, to weld together, to unite under one supreme head, without loss of dignity and self-respect to any one, the provinces till then disunited and hostile to one another.' Matrimonial alliances with some of the great Hindu houses, especially with the Rajput princes, formed one part of Akbar's plans for the consolidation of his now vast empire. Colonel Malleson has well said in this connexion: 'Akbar's toleration was so absolute, his trust once given so thorough, his principles so large and so generous, that despite the prejudices of their birth, their religion, their surroundings, they yielded to the fascination. And when, in return, Akbar asked them to renounce one long-standing prejudice which went counter to the great principle which they recognized as the corner-stone of the new system, the prejudice which taught them to regard other men, because they were not Hindus, as impure and unclean, they all, with one marked exception, gave way. They recognized that a principle such as that was not to be limited; that their practical renunciation of that portion of their narrow creed which forbade marriages with those of a different race, could not but strengthen the system which was giving peace and prosperity to their country, honour and consideration to themselves.' In the course of his great work of consolidation Akbar had occasion to visit his grandfather's favourite place of residence and last resting-place, Kabul. Of this visit the record thus runs: 'He stayed there two months, visiting the gardens and places of interest. All the people, noble and simple, profited by his presence.' Akbar, like many another great ruler in the Orient, knew the power of an appeal to the eye; and not the least potent factor in his plan of welding India into one harmonious whole, was his display of majesty and magnificence in his architectural monuments and in the surroundings of his court. Of his buildings the immense red-stone fortress of Agra, and

the palace with its surrounding buildings on the plateau of Fatehpur Sikri, form the finest illustrations of his genius for architectural display. To this day the picturesque ruins of what is really a city are one of the sights of India. The writer once spent a night at Fatehpur Sikri, and roamed amongst the magnificent relics of a glorious past. The glamour which the lustrous radiance of an Oriental hunter's moon threw over everything made him picture in his imagination the vacant halls peopled by the shades of their erewhile princely owners. It is of interest to note that while at the time of his visit there was much to seek in the state of preservation of some of the lesser architectural gems, these are now practically restored to all their pristine beauty, thanks to the care and attention of later British administrators. Pomp and circumstance were always the accompaniments of all court ceremonial on high days and holidays; but on all ordinary days, as Colonel Malleson has well said, 'Akbar was the simple, unaffected, earnest man, ever striving after truth, such as the great work of consolidation he accomplished gives evidence of.'

It is impossible to understand aright the principles that underlay Akbar's administration of his great empire without some reference to his mental outlook upon life. He appears to have inherited from his grandfather not only his essential joyousness of natural temperament but also his inquiring turn of mind. Babar had shown this in the region of natural history. Akbar showed it in the realm of religion. The great principle underlying his attitude towards religion was toleration, and if he himself was tolerant of other men's faiths, realizing that there was something good in all, he also expected his subjects, not only to be tolerant of other men's faiths, but to be tolerant of individual opinions within the limits of each man's faith. This was illustrated in the attitude he adopted towards the rite of Sati, in the case of Hindus, and towards the rigorous fasts and long prayers and certain other practices in the case of Muhammadans. While not absolutely prohibiting Sati, he gave orders that no widow was to be compelled to immolate herself on her husband's funeral pyre against her will; and he actively intervened on one occasion on behalf of a Jodhpur princess to prevent such a sacrifice. Similarly, as regards

certain practices among his own co-religionists, he preferred to give no direct orders, but used example, persuasion, and remonstrance to get a stop put to them, his whole object being that the conscience of no one should be strained. His inquiring mind was especially exhibited in the discussions which were the great feature of his reign. He had a great hall erected at Fatehpur Sikri, to hold these in; it was known as the Ibádat-Kháná, described as a palace for the reception of men of learning, genius, and solid acquirements. He was in the habit of repairing there on one evening in every week, and on holy days; and he would spend the night in the society of the occupants of the different sections, of which there were four, discussing various questions, of which religion, however, was the most prominent. The outcome of one of these discussions was a document, which the late Professor Blochmann has described as 'a document which I believe stands unique in the whole Church history of Islam'. In this document, Colonel Malleson has said, 'the emperor was certified to be a just ruler, and as such was assigned the rank of a Mujtahid, that is, an infallible authority in all matters relating to Islam.' And he adds, 'The signature of this document was a turning-point in the life and reign of Akbar. For the first time he was free. He could give currency and force to his ideas of toleration and of respect for conscience. He could now bring the Hindu, the Parsi, the Christian, into his councils. He could attempt to put into execution the design he had long meditated of making the interests of the indigenous princes the interests of the central authority at Agra. The document is in fact the Magna Charta of his reign.' If the discussion that had this outcome is the most important of those that Akbar held as giving the key-note of his administration, the most interesting discussion from a religious point of view is that one at which he had especially invited a Jesuit priest, a Portuguese missionary from Goa, to be present. It was a truly cosmopolitan gathering that came together on this famous occasion, a veritable Congress of Religions. There were present, says the historian, 'the most learned Muhammadan lawyers and doctors, Brahmans, Jains, Buddhists, Hindu materialists, Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians or Parsis, and each in his turn spoke.' The

term 'materialist' as used by the historian in speaking of the Hindu is hardly one that a writer conversant with the religious life and thought of Modern India would consider of universal application; certainly he would not regard it as applicable to the more thoughtful and cultured Hindu—and the writer of this sketch has had the privilege of many talks with such on this very subject. It can only be applied to such in so far as it may be used of all who regard a punctilious observance of outward forms and ceremonies, and much washing of cups and platters, as an integral part of their faith. Dr. G. A. Grierson would, indeed, deny the applicability of the term even to the uncultured Hindu. In the course of a paper read by him before the great Congress of Religions that has recently been holding its meetings at Oxford, he said: 'The cult of the millions of minor gods, or even of Brahma, has only relation to the material wants of the present life, and corresponds to the dulia or secondary veneration paid to saints and angels as the servants of God. Even the unlearned Hindu keeps this polytheistic mask to the worship of the one God on a different plane of thought.' No man is better qualified to speak on the subject of the religious life and thought of the great Hindi-speaking races of India, which are the chief races that have fallen from time to time under the influence of religious reformers, and which take great delight to this day in the writings of their favourite Tulsi Das, who undoubtedly did much to modify and widen their religious outlook. So far as these races, therefore, are concerned, what Dr. Grierson has said may be accepted as, in the main, true. But it would be going too far to say that it is applicable to all Hindus. The term 'materialist' then, though by no means of universal application, may still safely be used in speaking of many millions among the uncultured and ignorant masses, though even they, behind the millions of the minor gods they propitiate, may perhaps descry the dim shadow of 'The Unknown God'. The final outcome of Akbar's religious discussions was the promulgation of a religious code which he called Din-i-Iláhi, or The Divine Faith, and which, as Colonel Malleson has shown, consisted in the acknowledgement of one God, and of Akbar as His Khalifah, or Vicegerent on earth. Henceforth he stood

out not only as the ruler of his people, but as *Defensor Fidei*.

The influence on Akbar of the men whom he collected around him must also be taken into consideration in any estimate of him as a ruler and a man. The most distinguished of these were Bhagwan Das, the gallant Rajput prince of Jaipur, whose sister he married, and whom he made Governor of the Punjab ; his great general, Man Singh, also a prince of Jaipur, and one of the most brilliant warriors of his time, whom he made Governor of his far distant possession of Kabul; and his special favourite, Raja Birbal, a Brahman, who, besides being a gallant general, though not always a successful one, was also a poet and a skilful musician. Blochmann, indeed, has stated that 'his short verses, bon mots, and jokes are still in the mouths of the people of Hindustan '.

His chief adviser in matters of revenue, finance, and currency, was the Raja Todar Mull ; he was also Akbar's best commander. Of this great man Colonel Malleson has said : 'He was a man of great ability and of tried integrity. Though attached to the court of a Muhammadan sovereign, he was an earnest Hindu, and performed faithfully all the ceremonies of his religion. On one occasion when accompanying Akbar to the Punjab, in the hurry of departure he forgot his idols. As he transacted no business before his daily worship, he remained for several days without food or drink, and was at last with difficulty consoled by the emperor.' As one who has been privileged to see something of the inner life of Hindu princes, the writer can testify to the extent that religion permeates their daily life ; it is a real and vivifying force, and it is a revelation to see the discomforts and inconveniences to which such devout men will subject themselves when, under the stress of circumstances, such as a long journey abroad, they find themselves parted from their household divinities, and are unable to practise in the way their soul delights in, their customary daily observances. If religion is a real force in the lives of those Hindu princes whom the writer has been privileged to know on a more or less intimate footing, so is it in the lives of the great majority of Muhammadan gentlemen, and many are the lessons which their devotion

teaches to the observant and inquiring Englishman. The nations of the West have learned much in the past from the nations of the East: they have still much to learn: and it is of interest to note that the Churches, led by the Church of England, which is ever in the van of a true and enlightened liberalism, are at last awakening to the recognition of the fact that the world owes a deep debt to the religions of the East. It is no exaggeration to say that Asia has ever set an example before the world of reverence and self-control. The influence of the distinguished men mentioned above was especially displayed in the sphere of the executive: there were others whose influence was very great in the realms of speculation, religion, and the fine arts. Perhaps the most illustrious of these was Shaikh Abulfazl, the author of the *Ain-i-Akbari*. He was essentially a student: the attitude of his mind may best be illustrated by a quotation from his own words: 'My mind had no rest, and my heart felt itself drawn to the sages of Mongolia or to the hermits on Lebanon: I longed for interviews with the lamas of Tibet, or with the pádris of Portugal, and I would gladly sit with the priests of the Parsis, and the learned of the Zendavesta.' Then there was Badauni, the historian, whom Akbar employed in translating the Sanskrit epic, the *Ramayana*, and part of the *Mahabharata* into Persian, and who helped him so much in the arrangement of his library, in which he took so much interest. Another was Faizi, whom he had already employed in translating into Persian a correct version of the New Testament. Another man who must be mentioned here was Khán-i-Ázam Mirza, son of his favourite nurse, who possessed an extensive knowledge of history: he was also something of a poet, and Colonel Malleson mentions that one of his aphorisms has descended to posterity: it runs:—'A man should marry four wives—a Persian woman to have somebody to talk to; a Khorasani woman for his house-work; a Hindu woman for nursing his children, and a woman from Turkistan to have some one to whip as a warning to the other three.'

As regards the actual administrative measures of Akbar's reign, he was actuated by the desire to do justice to all classes of his subjects irrespective of their creed or race. One of his first acts was to abolish that tax that was so

obnoxious to the Hindus, and not unnaturally so, considering the insulting way it was often collected, even under the most enlightened rulers : this was the Jizya, or capitation tax, imposed by Muhammadan sovereigns on those of another faith. A description of the methods of collection of this tax will recall to mind an incident that may not have been recorded in the annals of British rule in India, though it was well known to have occurred during the visit to the then barbarous ruler of Bhutan of a British embassy. This description is from the pen of the author of the *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, and it thus runs : ‘ When the collector of the Diwan asks the Hindus to pay the tax, they should pay it with all humility and submission. And if the collector wishes to spit into their mouths, they should open their mouths without the slightest fear of contamination, so that the collector may do so. The object of such humiliation is to prove the obedience of infidel subjects under protection, and to promote the glory of the Islam, the true religion, and to show contempt for false religions.’ Akbar also abolished a tax that had been levied on Hindu pilgrimages, a tax that had been a very profitable source of revenue to his Afghan predecessors. This tax would appear to have been imposed again at a later period of Indian history, for it devolved upon a British Ruler of India to abolish it again. In his keen regard for the well-being and happiness of all his subjects he aimed at the removal of all restrictions that seemed to him to stand in the way. Thus he encouraged the remarriage of Hindu widows, and introduced a measure, which was practically the forerunner of the British Age of Consent Bill, forbidding marriages before the age of puberty. He was exceedingly regardful of the minutiae of administration ; whether matters were small or great it made no difference to him ; he attended to all with equal care : and one very important thing, as Colonel Malleson has noted, he was not content with merely giving an order, or issuing a regulation ; ‘ he watched its working ; developed it more fully if it were successful ; and marked the details of its action on the several races who constituted his subjects.’ In the department of land revenue administration, he largely followed the methods of one of his illustrious predecessors, the enlightened Afghan ruler, Sher Shah : the

principles of his system were the correct measurement of the land, the ascertaining the average production of a fixed block of land, the settlement of the proportion of that amount to be paid to the government, and the fixing of the equivalent in money for the settled amount in kind. Colonel Malleson has said : 'Akbar proposed rather to develop this principle than to interfere with it. With this object he established a uniform standard to supersede the differing standards theretofore employed. "This laudable regulation," we are told in the Ain, "removed the rust of uncertainty from the minds of collectors, and relieved the subject from a variety of oppressions, whilst the income became larger, and the State flourished."' The leading principle of his judicial administration was justice tempered by mercy. In the light of recent controversies in England on the Old Age Pensions Bill, it is of interest to note that Akbar thought that there were four classes to whom State aid might well be given : 'men of learning who are without private means ; men who practise self-denial, and live ascetic and solitary lives ; the weak and the poor who are unable to work ; and honourable men of gentle birth who have fallen on evil days.'

Akbar had not been altogether happy in his relations with his sons, but he had the happiness at the last of being reconciled with his favourite son, Prince Salim, who afterwards succeeded him as emperor, under the style and designation of Jahangir. The reconciliation took place when Akbar was lying on his death-bed. The story has been thus recorded : 'Salim, being now assured of the succession, repaired to the palace, where he was affectionately received by the dying Akbar. After the first affectionate greetings Akbar desired that all the nobles might be summoned to the presence, "for," he added, "I cannot bear that any misunderstanding should subsist between you and those who have for so many years shared in my toils, and been the companions of my glory." When the nobles entered, and had made their salutations, he said a few words to them in a body ; then, looking at each of them in succession, he begged them to forgive him if he had wronged any one of them. Prince Salim then threw himself at his feet, weeping ; but Akbar, signing to his attendants

to gird his son with his own scimitar and to invest him with the turban and robes of State, commended to his care the ladies of the palace, urged him to be kind and considerate to his old friends and associates, then, bowing his head, he died.' Thus passed away, like one of the great patriarchs of old, the most majestic figure that Asia has ever had the happiness of enrolling among the great rulers of the world. Well has Colonel Malleson said : 'When we reflect what he did, the age in which he did it, the method he introduced to accomplish it, we are bound to recognize in Akbar one of those illustrious men whom Providence sends, in the hour of a nation's trouble, to reconduct it into those paths of peace and toleration which alone can ensure the happiness of millions. More fortunate than his father and his grandfather, more far-sighted, more original, and, it must be added, possessing greater opportunities, he had lived long enough to convince the diverse races of Hindustan, that their safety, their practical independence, their enjoyment of the religion and customs of their forefathers, depended upon their recognition of the paramount authority which could secure to them these inestimable blessings.'

It has been left to a great Muhammadan leader of the present day, the Aga Khan, to raise his voice in favour of a similar recognition by all the diverse races of which India is still composed, of the same principle, the absolute necessity, if India is to advance along the paths of peaceful progress, and to be happy, of one strong, central authority possessing not only the same ability to maintain peace that Akbar's government possessed, but ruling on the same principles of conciliation and toleration. The utterance of the Aga Khan not only constitutes a most powerful Apologia for British rule at a time when such an Apologia coming from such a quarter is especially valuable, but it is a noble pronouncement in itself and an Eirenicon, and therefore well worthy of a place at the close of a sketch of a man whom not only Muhammadans but also all the peoples of India have always recognized as the greatest of their foreign rulers. Though primarily addressed to the Deccan Provincial Moslem League, it was intended for all India to hear : the essence of it as given in the leading columns of *The Times* is given here :—

'British rule—not only a titular supremacy, but a vigorous force permeating every branch of the administration—is an absolute necessity. Therefore, I put it to you that it is the duty of all true Indian patriots to make that rule strong. I do not mean strong in the physical sense. That is a duty of Great Britain which she is perfectly able to discharge. Moreover, Great Britain's mission in the East is not and never has been one of force, but of the peace and liberality which have brought to tens of millions in Asia the comfort, the prosperity, and the opportunities of intellectual advancement which they now enjoy. No, I mean strong in its hold on the mind, the affection, the imagination of the peoples of India. This is a duty which lies not only upon Muhammadans, but equally upon Hindus, Parsis, and Sikhs, upon all who are convinced of the benevolence of British rule. If there are any among the less thoughtful members of the Hindu community who think they can snatch temporary advantage by racial supremacy, let them pause upon all they would lose by the withdrawal of that British control under which has been effected the amazing progress of the past century. These are the patriotic ideals which, I think, should animate the Muhammadan community at the present juncture. . . Ours must be no lukewarm patriotism, no passive unemotional acquiescence in the established order. It must be a living, controlling, vitalizing force, guiding all our actions, shaping our ideals. Here in the Deccan we should pursue these ideals and combat the disruptive, retrograde forces at work in no sectarian spirit. Rather should it be our task to persuade by precept and example those Hindus who have strayed from the path of true progress to return to it.'

CHAPTER IV

THE DECAY OF THE MOGUL EMPIRE

Aurangzib, 1618–1707

The Emperor Akbar, whose reign had been contemporaneous with that of the great English Queen, Elizabeth, died in 1605 : he had been succeeded by his son Salim, who assumed the title of Jahangir, or Conqueror of the World. His was a curiously composite character. Sir W. W. Hunter has given this portrait of him : 'The new emperor conformed more strictly to the outward observances of Islam, but lacked the inward religious feeling of his father, while he forbade the use of wine to his subjects he spent his own nights in drunken revelry. He talked religion over his cups until he reached a certain stage of intoxication when he "fell to weeping and to various passions which kept them to midnight". In public he maintained a strict appearance of virtue, and never allowed any person whose breath smelt of wine to enter his presence. On one occasion a courtier who had shared his midnight revel, indiscreetly alluded to it next morning. The sultan gravely examined him as to who could possibly have been the companions of such a debauch, and bastinadoed them so severely that one of them died.' Sir W. W. Hunter's portrait of Jahangir is taken from the account given of his visit to Jahangir's court by Sir Thomas Roe, who was the first British ambassador to India. It is said that Sir Thomas Roe was present on one occasion when Jahangir was indulging in his potations, and that 'the strength of the double distilled liquor that he latterly took was so great that it made the ambassador sneeze, to the infinite amusement of the whole court'. In his earlier years Jahangir had accepted the new religion, or Divine Faith, of his father, Akbar, and by continuing his father's policy, especially in the treatment

of his Hindu subjects, he had won their loyalty. His successor was Prince Khurram, who styled himself Shah Jahan, King of the World. He was a more orthodox Muhammadan than his immediate predecessors, and his orthodoxy is said to have been fostered by his best-beloved wife, the mother of his fourteen children, the famous Mumtaz Mahal in whose honour he raised that beautiful mausoleum at Agra, the Taj Mahal, which has been well described as 'a dream in marble, designed by Titans and finished by jewellers'. This is one of the great historic monuments in India, to whose preservation, as far as possible in their pristine beauty, the British Rulers of India have devoted so much attention. Lord Lytton, when Viceroy of India, recorded on a tablet fixed in Shah Jahan's palace at Agra, the special debt that India owes to the memory of the late Sir John Strachey. The inscription on this tablet, which has been recorded by a writer in a recent number of *The Times*, thus runs: 'In grateful commemoration of services rendered to posterity by the Honourable Sir John Strachey, G.C.S.I. To whom, not forgetting the enlightened sympathy and timely care of others, India is mainly indebted for the rescued and preserved beauty of the Taj Mahal and other famous monuments of the ancient arts and history of these Provinces formerly administered by him, this tablet is placed by order of his friend, the Earl of Lytton, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, A. D. 1880.' It has been said that there was a slight tinge of intolerance in Shah Jahan's nature, but he was wise enough not to allow his orthodoxy to override statesmanship; he also retained the loyalty of his Hindu subjects. One of these has extolled 'the equity of Shah Jahan's rule, his wise and liberal administration of the land, the probity of his courts of law, his personal auditing of his accounts, and the prosperity of the country resulting from all these causes'. The French traveller, Tavernier, also speaks highly of the gracious government of the emperor as 'like that of a father over his family'. He was not destined to see out his days in peace; his sons rebelled; he was himself deposed by Aurangzib in 1658, and eventually died a State prisoner in the fort of Agra in 1666. This seems to have been largely due to defects in his own character which revealed them-

selves as he grew older ; a writer has said : ‘ From having been a grave stern man in his prime, an energetic soldier, and a prudent counsellor, he became at the age of sixty-four a mere sensual pleasure-loving pageant of royalty, given over entirely to ease and the delights of the eye.’

Aurangzib was destined by his bigotry to alienate his Hindu subjects ; his character was in marked contrast to that of his immediate forbears. Sir Alfred Lyall has revealed one secret of his intolerant bias of mind when he says : ‘ The Emperors Jahangir and Shah Jahan were both sons of Hindu mothers ; but Aurangzib, the son of Shah Jahan, and the fourth in descent from Akbar, was a Muhammadan by full parentage, and a bigoted Islamite by temperament.’ Doubtless his Muhammadan mother had seen to it that he should be brought up in the straitest sect of Islam ; and to his early religious training much of his later policy of fanatic persecution of his Hindu subjects is doubtless due. He had already in early youth displayed the puritanical direction of his mind; it is recorded of him that when he was twenty-four years of age, he announced his intention of retiring from the world, and actually for the space of a year took up his abode in the wild regions of the Western Ghats, and adopted the rigorous system of self-mortification, which distinguished the Faqir, or mendicant friar of Islam. He is not the first Indian ‘ dreamer of dreams ’, who has been thus attracted to a life of asceticism. This spirit of asceticism is more common among Hindus perhaps than among Muhammadans ; it is sometimes due, as it seems indeed to have been in Aurangzib’s case, to a natural reaction from the laxity in matters of religious observances that may have characterized their forbears. Instances are not unknown in these days of Hindu princes who have gone through very similar experiences ; this is often due not only to this natural reaction, but also to an innate gloom of temperament, which it often needs the influence of ‘ the sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of music ’ to dispel. A bed that can give forth a note of music when pressed has before now been not unknown as an article of furniture in the retiring-rooms of an Oriental prince who suffers from ennui. With

Aurangzib, however, it was a passing phase, and, as his biographer has said, he was to prove himself no ‘ deedless dreamer, lazying out a life of self-suppression ’, but a statesman, and a strenuous leader of men. He received his first command in connexion with operations in the outlying provinces of the Mogul empire so far to the north-west as Balkh and Badakshan, and again, in south-western Afghanistan, and though he was accompanied on these expeditions by military advisers, he displayed the real military qualities of personal courage and generalship ; it is on record that ‘ the generals with him learnt to appreciate him at his true value, and the men discovered that their prince was as cool and steady a leader as the best officer in India ’. What especially struck the army was his extreme coolness ; this was never better exemplified than in the course of one battle, which was still being hotly contested when the hour of evening prayer arrived ; Aurangzib calmly dismounted and performed his religious rites under fire. The reputation he thus gained proved of the greatest value to him when the time came for that struggle between the sons of Shah Jahan which had for its object the possession of their father's crown, even before the uneasy head that wore it lay still in death. As has been well said : ‘ Aurangzib had gone on these expeditions an unknown quantity, a reputed devotee, with no military record to give him prestige. He came back an approved general, a man of tried courage and proved endurance, a prince whose wisdom, coolness, and resolution had been tested and proved ; he was now deservedly placed in the front rank of India's generals ; men indeed now saw in him a more worthy Ruler of India than any of his brothers.' Aurangzib's reward for his conduct of the campaigns was the Governorship of the Deccan, in that capacity he added to his renown both as a general and a diplomatist. He was there when the news of his father's serious illness reached him in the autumn of 1657. It was this news that precipitated the rebellion of Shah Jahan's four sons, which ended in Aurangzib's overcoming the rivalry of his brothers, and making himself supreme arbiter of the State. His biographer has quoted some lines from Dryden on this event :—

As at a signal, straight the sons prepare
For open force, and rush to sudden war;
Meeting like winds broke loose upon the main
To prove by arms whose Fate it was to reign.

It had ever been the custom among the Mogul emperors to appear in public at least every other day or so: Shah Jahan had thus been accustomed to show himself on the small balcony by which access was obtained from the State apartments to the halls both of public and of private audience, and which is a prominent feature high up in those halls; his absence, therefore, during his severe illness had led to rumours being spread abroad that he was dead, and in spite of the assurances of Dara, the emperor's eldest son, that Shah Jahan still lived, all men made ready for the inevitable struggle. Of Aurangzib's three brothers, Dara, Shah Shuja, and Murad Baksh, Dara was to prove his most formidable antagonist, he was Shah Jehan's favourite son, and was, moreover, very popular with the people, so much so, that Bernier, the French traveller and annalist, has recorded how much they lamented his death, when, having finally fallen into the hands of Aurangzib, he was executed after having been paraded through the streets of Delhi. Bernier has said 'I observed the people weeping and lamenting the fate of Dara in the most touching language; men, women, and children wailing as if some mighty calamity had happened to themselves'. Aurangzib did not attain his supreme position till after very severe fighting. He had first to encounter a strong force of Rajputs, under Jaswant Singh of Marwar. On first meeting this great chieftain, Aurangzib had sent him this message: 'I desire only to visit my father; I do not wish for war; either come with me, or keep out of my way that no blood be shed.' The Rajput only sent a haughty reply, and the battle commenced. It was so hotly contested that only 600 Rajputs remained alive out of a force of 6,000. The story goes that the Rajput wife of Jaswant Singh shut the castle gates in his face when he returned, saying, 'I disown him as my husband; these eyes can never again behold him; if he could not vanquish, he should die.' At a latter date, however, she seems to have received him into favour again.

The most severe fighting took place in a battle between the two brothers Aurangzib and Dara; the former was assisted by Murad Baksh. In the Orient great importance is ever attached to the sight of the commander; in the hottest part of the battle Aurangzib and Murad Baksh remembered this; and they had the legs of their elephants chained together to prevent them from going off in a panic such as not uncommonly comes over these usually sagacious animals at a critical moment, whether in war or in sport, and they themselves remained mounted. Dara had forgotten it, and had dismounted; at once the cry was raised, 'Where is Dara? Dara is dead.' A panic set in amongst his followers, and the day was Aurangzib's. The way now lay open, and in June, 1658, he entered the fortress-palace where the old emperor was, overcame the guard, and made him his prisoner. It is said that he treated the old emperor indulgently and respectfully, and though they never met again, the two became partially reconciled, and the father bestowed his blessing and his forgiveness on his son before his death early in 1666. Aurangzib threw his brother and quondam ally, Murad Baksh, into chains, and hunted his other brother, Shuja, over the border into Arakan, where he was eventually lost among the mountains, and, as the historian has with pathos said, 'he was heard of no more.' Thus, acting on an old saying attributed to the Sultan Bayazid, 'Kingship knows no kinship,' Aurangzib made himself undisputed master, and on the 26th of May, 1659, he formally ascended the throne as Emperor of India.

Various estimates have been formed of Aurangzib's personal character as a man. Some writers unable to excuse the executions by which he raised himself to the purple, have gone so far as to charge him with being a hypocrite, who used religion as a cloak for ambition. Such writers cannot appreciate the attitude of the devout Muhammadan whose orthodoxy compels him to say his prayers in public, according to the circumstances he may find himself in when the stated hours for prayer come round; such acts to them, accustomed only to Western practice, seem to savour of ostentatious pharisaism. It would be a revelation to them to see how to this day, and even among some of the most highly-cultivated followers

of Islam, the stated hours of prayer are made to take precedence of everything; it is no uncommon thing at great public entertainments to find small tents scattered here and there for Muhammadan gentlemen to retire to for prayer. When the present Amir of Afghanistan visited India recently, his scruples on the subject were always most carefully respected and provision made accordingly. Muhammadan writers regard Aurangzib's executions as perfectly natural, and as in entire keeping with Oriental traditions; in the East it is certainly true, and not uncommonly also in the West, not only with individuals, but also with nations, as recent events have exemplified in the case of Great Britain, that a man's deadliest foes are often those of his own household. 'To the Muhammadans of India,' it has been said, 'Aurangzib is the ideal type of the devout and uncompromising Muhammadan king, and his sanguinary advance to the throne is forgotten in his subsequent zeal for the faith, and undeviating observance of the law and practice of Islam. For the first time in their history the Moguls beheld a rigid Muhammadan in their emperor, a Muhammadan as sternly repressive of himself as of the people round him; a king who was prepared to stake his throne for the sake of his faith.' He might, had he so chosen, have cast his religion to the winds, and still kept, and indeed strengthened his hold on the sceptre of Hindustan, his Hindu subjects certainly would have been better pleased, but such was not his nature; his religion was part of the man. He never courted popularity; whatever else he was, he was no hypocrite. It must be remembered, moreover, that the hostile criticisms that have been passed on Aurangzib take into consideration mainly his conduct as prince, his acts as emperor have called forth chiefly admiration. Almost all writers are agreed that throughout his long reign of nearly fifty years almost the only deed of cruelty that has been proved against him was his execution of the Mahratta prince, Sambhaji, and even in this case there are not wanting apologists who see in the savage virulence of that chieftain some justification for Aurangzib's action. Even his persecutions of the Hindus, the natural outcome of his puritanical nature, were admittedly marked by no executions or tortures. Religious

zeal formed only one side of Aurangzib's character; he was brave with no ordinary courage; that act already referred to of his calmly dismounting to pray in the thick of a sanguinary encounter with the Uzbeks, is said to have called forth a remark from their king that 'To fight with such a man is self-destruction'. One act of splendid audacity is recorded of him. He was in pursuit of his brother Dara, and had gone on ahead of his army accompanied only by a few followers. Suddenly he found himself confronted with one of Dara's allies, Jai Singh, a Rajput prince, who had intended seizing his person, and sending him a prisoner to the capital of Shah Jahan. The story is thus told: 'Aurangzib took a sudden resolve; riding up to the Raja, he cried, "Hail, my lord father! I have been impatiently awaiting you. The war is over, Dara is ruined, and wanders alone." Then taking off his pearl necklace, and putting it round the Raja's neck, he said, "My army is weary, and I wish you to go to Lahore, lest it should revolt. I appoint you governor of the city, and commit all things to your hands. Haste to Lahore. Peace be with you. Farewell."' He even shared the perils and hardships of the common soldier, and recklessly exposed himself to the enemy at all times, and herein he resembled his great ancestor, Babar.

Aurangzib had a very high standard of kingly duty. He had his own theories, moreover, as to the kind of education most suited to train a young prince for the responsibilities of government. A story is related of him that will serve to illustrate this: After his coronation at Delhi, his old tutor hurried there to interview him, hoping to receive a handsome reward from his former pupil, now an emperor. To his surprise he received only a reproof for the narrow course of study his curriculum had consisted of. The old gentleman was an ordinary Muhammadan schoolmaster, who thought he had done his duty when he had taught his royal pupil the ordinary conventional subjects, the Quran, the mysteries of Arabic grammar, and the various scholastic accomplishments that made up, and still, in many cases, make up the orthodox body of learning in the East. Aurangzib presented an outline to his old tutor of what the education of a prince ought to be. 'Was it

not incumbent,' he said, ' upon my preceptor to make me acquainted with the distinguishing features of every nation of the earth ; its resources, and its strength, its mode of warfare, its manners, religion, form of government, and wherein its interests principally consist ; and by a regular course of historical reading, to render me familiar with the origin of States, their progress and decline. I should have been made familiar with the language of surrounding nations, instead whereof you wasted the precious hours of my youth in the dry, unprofitable, and never-ending task of learning words. Then you should have instructed me in the reciprocal duties between the ruler and his subjects, and again you should have instructed me in the art of war.' When he had given his old tutor this address, he dismissed him into obscurity with the words : ' Go, withdraw to thy village. Henceforth let no person know who thou art, or what is become of thee.' In the scheme of education thus mapped out by Aurangzib will be found very practical hints for all who have to do with the training of future rulers of States ; the practical course he thus inculcated included geography, history, modern languages, the science of government, and that all-important physical training, the most useful factors in which are military drill, riding, and shooting. In one point especially he touched on a defect that has marred education in India not only in times past, but in present times, the memorizing of mere words, and his advice on this subject may well be called golden words of wisdom for all who have to do with the education of the youth of India. The responsibilities of rulers and their obligations to those they are called upon to govern have rarely been more nobly expressed than they were by Aurangzib in a speech he made on one occasion to his nobles. They had remonstrated with him on his incessant application to public business. The gist of his reply to their remonstrance was that, just as in seasons of difficulty and danger an obligation lay on a sovereign to hazard his life and if necessary to die sword in hand in defence of the people committed to his care, so a similar obligation rested on him not to spare himself, and not to consider his own bodily health in devising means to promote the public welfare ; above all a ruler

had no business to delegate his duties and responsibilities to others. He concluded his speech with this fine quotation from Sa'di :—

> Cease to be Kings! Oh, cease to be Kings! Or determine that your dominions shall be governed only by yourselves.

And as Aurangzib's theories were, such was his practice; they became the ruling principles of his administration. It has been said that no act of injustice has ever been proved against him. The English merchants on the west of India who had some experience of the ways of Aurangzib fully recognized his great qualities. They are recorded to have said of him : 'The great Mogul is the main ocean of justice; he generally determines with exact justice and equity, for there is no pleading of peerage or privilege before the emperor, but the meanest man is as soon heard by Aurangzib as the first noble.' With a thoughtfulness not common with Oriental despots, Aurangzib is said to have maintained relief kitchens for his poorer subjects in times of famine, and to have remitted various vexatious taxes that pressed heavily upon them. The great defect in his character as a ruler was his suspicious habit of mind. He rarely trusted any one. His own father had once said of him : 'Able as he is in war, and in counsel, in action, and in administration, he is too full of subtle suspicion, and never likely to find any one he can trust.' Aurangzib maintained a large staff of official reporters, who were a class of Crown inspectors, and whose business was practically 'to spy out the land'; these officials were naturally most dreaded by corrupt administrators, and landowners. Such espionage, however, must have been particularly galling to the public servant who was conscious to himself of his own rectitude, and must have gone far to weaken his efficiency. But most public servants in a subordinate capacity have often to put up with it as all part of their day's work; and they may console themselves with reflecting on the sage words of a writer in a recent number of *The Spectator* who has said : 'If only it were certain that to behave decently were to command decent treatment in return, we should live in a happy world indeed. But,

alas, the world has not yet reached the stage where some day (let us hope) hearts will be laid open and read like books. Till then those who conduct all great affairs on the principle that what we know to be true of ourselves will be accepted as true by others, live in what we are bound to call a fool's paradise.' Aurangzib employed tasters in the imperial kitchens whose business it was to test all food that was supplied to his table; his daughter is said, indeed, to have been his taster-in-chief. So with any medicine he had to take, his medical advisers are said to have 'taken pill for pill and dose for dose', in order that he might watch the operation of the medicine upon their bodies before he would venture to take it himself. This general habit of distrust was naturally fatal to his popularity; he was universally respected but he was never loved. 'Such an one,' says his biographer, 'may administer an empire, but he can never rule the hearts of men.'

To govern an empire made up of such composite materials as was the Mogul empire, which contained within it such different nationalities as the Rajputs, Pathans, Persians, and Mahrattas, could at no time have been an easy task. The great masses of the people, moreover, were Hindus, who regarded the domination of the Mogul, as indeed it was, as a foreign one. Sir Alfred Lyall has quoted what François Bernier, the celebrated Frenchman, who was court physician to the Mogul emperor towards the beginning of Aurangzib's long reign, has said in this connexion: 'The great Mogul is a foreigner in Hindustan, consequently he finds himself in a hostile country, or nearly so, containing hundreds of Hindus to one Mogul, or even to one Muhammadan.' Sir Alfred Lyall goes on to say: 'Akbar and his two successors were politic rulers who allied themselves with the princely families of the Hindus, respected up to a certain point the prejudices of the population, and kept both civil and religious despotism within reasonable bounds.' Aurangzib, it is curious to relate, considering his well-known orthodoxy, had also thus allied himself, for among his wives were Rajput princesses, and it is even on record that he married a Georgian Christian princess, one Udaipuri by name. But he was entirely lacking in the conciliatory

tact of his predecessors, and his task was all the harder in consequence. It has been said that the Mogul domination in India was even more in the nature of an army of occupation than the camp to which the Ottoman empire has been compared. Such a system naturally needed a large standing army to overawe and keep in check each separate source of insurrection. Besides, the emperor needed a special force devoted to his own person, who would look to him for rank and wealth, or even the bare means of subsistence. Akbar had inaugurated a system whereby such a body came into existence; the members of it were known as Mansabdars. They were personally paid by the emperor, either in money or in land, and were graded in rank from a commander of 500 up to a commander of 12,000; the higher ranks were known as Amirs, or Nobles. Each trooper was supposed to keep two horses, for, as a common saying current among them ran: 'A one-horse trooper was regarded as little better than a one-legged man.' The possessions and lands of these Mansabdars were held entirely at the will and pleasure of the emperor, who thus kept the control of the army in his own hands. The civil administration was run on much the same lines as the military. The governors of provinces were also Mansabdars, who received grants of land in lieu of salary, and they were required to pay one-fifth of the revenue to the emperor. Such a system naturally led to many abuses, and the appointment of the court inspectors, to whom reference has been made, seems to have been an absolute necessity, more especially in the remoter provinces of the empire. Aurangzib, himself a mirror of honour and incorruptibility, kept a tight hand on the administration within touch of his capitals, Agra and Delhi, but he could not always know what was going on in the outlying provinces, and as many of these court inspectors had their own price for silence, it is recorded that the cruelty and rapacity of the great landholders went on practically unchecked. The historian of the day has said: 'The peasantry and working classes, and even the better sort of merchants used every precaution to hide such small prosperity as they might enjoy. They dressed and lived meanly, and sternly suppressed all inclinations

to raise themselves socially in the scale of civilization.' To this day, indeed, it may or may not be a relic from past times, it is extremely difficult to judge of a man's wealth from his dress or his home surroundings. It is one of the difficulties experienced by all upon whom may devolve the duty of assessment of taxation in municipal areas : some of the wealthiest of merchants dress meanly, and live in the meanest of abodes. Large resources were necessary for the upkeep of the magnificent court that the Mogul emperors, Aurangzib not excepted, kept up, for the maintenance of their standing armies, for the salaries of their great nobles, and of the immense civil staff entertained. The bulk of the revenue came from land ; while in Akbar's time the land revenue had amounted to some twenty millions, in Aurangzib's days it had increased to forty millions ; and his total revenue from all sources was not far short of ninety millions sterling. The land administration, so far as Aurangzib could personally sec to it, has been described as theoretically equitable, but still for all that, when it is considered that the Mogul demand was one-third of the gross produce, instead of the one-tenth share demanded by the British, the hand of the Mogul must have pressed heavily on all owners or occupiers of land.

An historian has said : 'We read of few disturbances or insurrections in all the fifty years of Aurangzib's reign : such wars as there were, were either campaigns of aggression outside the normal limits of the empire, or were deliberately provoked by the emperor's intolerance.' Among the former were two campaigns that took his generals as far afield as Assam and Arakan, and his campaign against the Muhammadan kingdoms of the Deccan. Among the latter were an abortive insurrection among some of the great Rajput chieftains, and his long wars with the Mahrattas, provoked undoubtedly by his active display of intolerance towards his Hindu subjects. The expedition against Assam was under the command of one of Aurangzib's most capable generals, Mir Jumla. It failed, and Mir Jumla died not long after his return. Aurangzib, in offering his condolences to Mir Jumla's son, said : 'You mourn a loving father, and I the most powerful and most dangerous of my friends.' Chittagong, the capital of Arakan, had long been a veritable

cave of Adullam. The king welcomed there every kind of desperate adventurer; many of these were either Portuguese or half-castes of Portuguese blood. They were mostly dangerous pirates, and the Governor of Bengal, Shaista Khan, did good service in bringing them to book. Shaista Khan was supported in his operations against them by the Dutch, and was completely successful in suppressing piracy in the Bay of Bengal. These operations were not without one indirect result for the British—they paved the way for their future settlement in Bengal. Aurangzib himself indeed came into collision with the British, but only after the Company had determined to build up its power in India, as Sir W. W. Hunter has said, by acquiring territorial possessions, so as to enable it to resist the oppression of the Moguls and the Mahrattas. This period, he adds, dates from the passing of the following resolution for the guidance of their servants in India: 'The increase of our revenue is the subject of our care, as much as our trade: 'tis that must maintain our force when twenty accidents may interrupt our trade: 'tis that must make us a nation in India.' This resolution was followed by the Company obtaining in 1687, King James's authority for their Governor to make peace and war in India, and by their appointment of Sir John Child, with the style of 'Governor-General and Admiral of India', with full power to make peace and war and to arrange for the safety of the Company's possessions. This was tantamount to a declaration of war against the Emperor Aurangzib, and so he took it to be. The only result, as Sir Alfred Lyall has shown, was that all the English settlements were placed in great jeopardy by this rashness. When it is recorded that at this time the garrison of Bombay consisted of fifteen European soldiers in addition to a raw native militia, splendid audacity seems a more fitting expression to use in this connexion than mere rashness. The final outcome has been thus humorously recorded by Sir Alfred Lyall: 'Sir John Child, who impersonated the war policy of the Company, died in 1689, and the business ended rather ignominiously with the issue by Aurangzib of a lofty order, reciting that on receipt of a humble submissive petition by the English, His Majesty had mercifully pardoned their transgressions. At this

message the Company's Directors at home professed great indignation, for no such petition had been sent, but the moment was not opportune for prosecuting the quarrel.' And Aurangzib himself, as Sir Alfred Lyall has added, 'thereafter became too deeply entangled in the meshes of guerrilla warfare and sporadic insurrections for dealing thoroughly with comparatively insignificant mercantile intruders.'

Aurangzib was fated to permanently alienate the allegiance of all his Hindu subjects, but it was some years before he actually put the machinery in motion for carrying out his repressive policy towards this important class of his subjects, whose numbers were far greater than those of his Muhammadan co-religionists. As usual with the Mogul monarchs, he had retired for a period of repose after the arduous duties of governing, to the beautiful and restful vales of Kashmir. The remains of the beautiful garden seats of the Moguls are still to be seen; some are in a more or less well-preserved condition, such as one on the banks of the great lake in the immediate vicinity of Srinagar, where the present rulers of Kashmir still occasionally entertain their distinguished English visitors at State banquets; others there are of which the only sign of their having once been beautiful pleasaunces is the wild growth of sweet-scented rose-bushes. How these latter have, under the influence of time, that all-devourer of things, relapsed into jungle, the writer during a shooting expedition in the country had an amusing illustration of. In one such, a black bear was seen standing up in one of the rose-bushes, busily engaged in shaking the sweet petals down. As in the central regions of India bears greedily eat the sweet blossoms of the Mhowa which they similarly shake down, so in Kashmir they do not despise the scented rose-leaf, and they are especially fond in its season of the wild mulberry. The cool fountains of these beautiful retreats failed to quench the fire of Aurangzib's ardent zeal for Islam. Almost immediately on his return from one such visit, he searched for an opportunity to bring it into play. Sufficient cause for action seemed to him to present itself in a report that reached him, doubtless from one of his court inspectors, or news-writers, as they really

were, from that sacred fount of Hinduism, the holy city of Benares, that the Brahmans were in the habit of teaching, what his reporters called 'The wicked sciences', not only to the followers of their own persuasion, but to adherents of Islam. This seemed to the emperor to savour of proselytism, and he promptly issued a rigorous edict, which was to this effect: 'The Director of the Faith orders the governors of all the provinces to destroy with a willing hand the schools and temples of the infidels, and to put a stop to the teaching and practice of idolatrous forms of worship.' Needless to say such an order could only be honoured in the breach thereof, and all that was done was to make a few signal examples to warn the Brahmans not to attempt to make proselytes from among Muhammadans; and further, as a standing menace to the city, Aurangzib had built that mosque which is called to this day by his name, and the tall minarets of which overshadow the countless shrines of Hinduism, from the high ground on which it stands. He also had to suppress a rebellion of that curious sect of Hindus, known as the Satnamis, or followers of the Holy Name, who are found to this day most largely in the central tracts of India, chiefly amongst a class of cultivators who are known as Chamars, and who are largely suspected, not altogether without good reason, of belonging to the professional class of cattle-poisoners. It is said that Aurangzib, finding that his troops were becoming demoralized by fear of the supposed magical powers of this sect, resolved to counteract their witchcraft by holy charms of his own invention. So he wrote out pious texts, and had them sewn on to his banners. Only after hard fighting was the insurrection suppressed. The most important class of his Hindu subjects that Aurangzib succeeded in alienating were the Rajputs, who had hitherto, under the wise and conciliatory policy of his predecessors, been the most trusty and the most loyal of his subjects, as at this day, as becomes a brave and chivalrous race, they are among the subjects of His Majesty, the King Emperor. The special incident that fanned the prevailing discontent into a flame was his imposition of the hated poll-tax, called Jizya, on all Hindus. A rebellion broke out, in which one of Aurangzib's sons,

Prince Akbar, took part. Of the three leading Rajput houses of Marwar, Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Udaipur, Jaipur alone remained loyal. The danger temporarily passed as soon as Aurangzib had succeeded by a stratagem in restoring the Mogul troops who were with his son to their allegiance. A treaty was made between Aurangzib and the leading Rajput chieftain, but, as the historian has said: 'The breach caused by Aurangzib's intolerance was never really closed up, and never again did Aurangzib find a Rajput stirring even a finger on his behalf. He might have had them as priceless allies on his coming campaign in the Deccan, but he had alienated them, as indeed he had all good Hindus, by his intolerance.'

The most bitter enemies of Aurangzib were the Mahrattas, and one of the greatest claims of Sivaji, the great guerrilla chief, to the veneration of his countrymen and co-religionists is that he stood forth as protector of the Hindus for the greater part of his rather stormy career. There was a time indeed in that career when he might have been willing to take permanent service under the Moguls. He offered his services to Shah Jahan, and was made a Mansabdar in command of a body of 5,000 horse. He had used this force indeed to aggrandize himself, and it became one of Aurangzib's early tasks, and a very difficult one it proved, to run him to earth. He had then agreed to become a vassal, and in full expectation that Aurangzib would confer upon him the coveted distinction of Viceroy of the Deccan, he actually went to Delhi to do homage to the emperor as viceroy. Whether he would ever have been contented, even if he had obtained such power as this appointment would have given him, is another matter. Anyhow, Aurangzib, by his contemptuous attitude towards him at this time, lost all opportunity he might ever have had of conciliating him. With his intolerance and his pride as a Muhammadan, he thought of him only as 'a fanatical Hindu and a vulgar Mahratta'. The story goes that when Sivaji attended a public Darbar, Aurangzib, far from recognizing him as Viceroy of the Deccan, allowed him to stand unnoticed among officers of the third rank only. Sivaji also was proud, with that intense pride that is one of the characteristics of his race; the slight was

too much for him, he was deeply affronted, and 'pale and sick with shame and fury' he quitted the presence without waiting for the formal breaking up of the Darbar, and the ceremonious observances that accompany it. The one unpardonable offence to an Oriental is what is popularly called 'Blacking a man's face', and giving him 'A bad name'; Aurangzib had made Sivaji an enemy for life. He managed to escape from Delhi packed in a basket, and he was soon ranging the Deccan again. At one time Aurangzib is recorded to have recognized him as Raja, mainly through the mediation of the Rajput chief, Jaswant Singh, and to have made a Treaty with him. It is recorded that again Sivaji might have been content to remain quiescent, and to administer in peace the territories over which his authority had been thus recognized. Indeed he was beginning to show that just as he possessed all the qualities of a great military leader, so he also possessed those pertaining to the successful civil administrator. But again Aurangzib set his armies in motion against him, and again Sivaji renewed his depredations in Mogul lands, and was meditating still further aggrandizement, when death put an end to his brilliant and erratic career in 1680, when he was not quite fifty-three years old. A Muhammadan writer has given a generous estimate of Sivaji's character in these terms: 'Sivaji always strove to maintain the honour of the people in his territories; he persisted in rebellion, plundering caravans and troubling mankind. But he was absolutely guiltless of baser sins, and was scrupulous of the honour of the women and children of the Muhammadans, when they fell into his hands,' and the writer adds: 'If a Quran was at any time taken by his men, he gave it reverently back to some Muhammadan.' Sir Alfred Lyall has said: 'After Sivaji's death, his son Sambhaji continued the revolt. The imperial armies were gradually worn out by incessant warfare, by futile pursuits of an enemy that always avoided a decisive blow, and by the disorganization of the central government caused by the emperor's long absence from his capital on distant campaigns. It was the capture and execution of Sambhaji that did more than anything else to unite the Hindus of the south-west country into strenuous

revolt against the fanatic Muhammadan sovereign.' Out of this united action arose that mighty Mahratta confederation that did so much to weaken the foundations of the great Mogul empire till it fell into irretrievable ruin and decay.

Whatever hopes Aurangzib might have entertained of crushing the Mahratta revolt disappeared with his conquest of the two surviving Muhammadan kingdoms in the Deccan, Bijapur and Golconda. Had he been far-sighted enough to realize in time what the consequences of his action would be, he might have hesitated to destroy kingdoms which, had he sought their alliance instead of their destruction, might have served as an effective breakwater against the rising tide of Mahratta ascendancy. But even as prince he had been ambitious to subjugate southern India and bring it within the dominions of the Mogul. Of the five independent Muhammadan kingdoms of the Deccan, Akbar had incorporated Berar within the Mogul dominions. As his father, Shah Jahan's lieutenant, Aurangzib had already subdued two of the remaining four, Bidar and Ahmadnagar, and he had determined to subdue the others as soon as he himself became emperor. For twenty-five years he attempted the subjugation of Bijapur and Golconda by means of his generals. Towards the end of this period his son Akbar had rebelled and joined the Mahratta army: then, says Sir W. W. Hunter, 'Aurangzib felt that he must either give up his magnificent palace in the north for a soldier's tent in the Deccan, or he must relinquish his most cherished scheme of conquering southern India. He accordingly prepared an expedition on an unrivalled scale of numbers and splendour to be led by himself. In 1683 he arrived at the head of his grand army in the Deccan, and spent the next half of his reign, or twenty-four years, in the field in southern India.' Aurangzib did not make his task any easier by continuing his unconciliatory attitude towards the Hindus. He continually irritated them, not only by the imposition of the hated poll-tax, but by certain sumptuary regulations, such as that no Hindu was to ride in a palanquin, or to mount an Arab horse without his express permission. It is recorded that one of his officers, on being deputed to levy the poll-tax

at Burhanpur, wrote and asked to be relieved, 'as he found his duties really so unpleasant.' Bijapur was the first to fall, but only starvation caused it to surrender, after a heroic defence lasting over a whole year. Aurangzib himself had directed the operations. The King of Golconda offered the most heroic resistance, and his capital only eventually fell through treachery from within, similarly after a year's siege. One incident in the siege reads almost like a chapter out of the history of the Roman wars: 'Some of the besiegers had actually gained the ramparts, when a dog gave the alarm. The garrison killed their assailants, and threw down the ladders; the dog was rewarded with a golden collar.' It is pleasing to record that Aurangzib treated the brave and heroic King of Golconda with grave courtesy and chivalry. Abul Hasan had been able to command the services of men as brave and chivalrous as himself, and though he had one traitor among his lieutenants, most of them were like the hero, Abdur Razzak, of whom it is recorded that when Aurangzib, in recognition of his bravery, sent him a message as he was lying on his sick bed, offering him service, his reply was: 'No man who had eaten the salt of Abul Hasan could enter the service of Aurangzib.' Golconda and Bijapur were finally annexed to the Mogul empire in 1688. During the remaining twenty years of his life Aurangzib was engaged in incessant war with the Mahrattas; his cruelty towards Sivaji's son and successor, Sambhaji, whom he captured and put to death in 1689, stands forth as the one blot on an otherwise fine character. It is said, as an excuse for the emperor, that he was infuriated by the Mahratta's vituperation of himself, and his blasphemy against his religion. Of this period Sir W. W. Hunter has said: 'In the first year of the eighteenth century Aurangzib seemed to have almost stamped out their existence. But, after a guerrilla warfare, the Mahrattas again sprang up into a powerful fighting nation. In 1705, they recovered their forts, while Aurangzib had exhausted his health, his treasures, and his troops in the long and fruitless struggle. His soldiery murmured for arrears; and the emperor, now old and peevish, told the malcontents that if they did not like his service, they

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might quit it, while he disbanded some of the cavalry to ease his finances. Meanwhile the Mahrattas were pressing hungrily on the imperial camp. The grand army of Aurangzib had grown during a quarter of a century into an unwieldy capital. Its movements were slow, and incapable of concealment. If Aurangzib sent out a rapid small expedition against the Mahrattas, who plundered and insulted the outskirts of his camp, they cut it to pieces. If he moved out against them in force, they vanished. His own soldiery feasted with the enemy, who prayed, with mock ejaculations, for the health of the emperor as their best friend.' But that health was now permanently broken, and in February, 1707, he passed away in the fort of Ahmadnagar. It was a sad end, as Sir W. W. Hunter has shown in his fine description of it: 'Dark suspicion of his sons' loyalty, and just fears lest they should subject him to the cruel fate which he had inflicted on his father, left him solitary in his last days. On the approach of death he gave utterance in broken sentences to his worldly counsels, and adieus, mingled with terror and remorse, and closing in an agony of desperate resignation: 'Come what may, I have launched my vessel on the waves. Farewell! Farewell! Farewell!'

An Italian physician has given a portrait of Aurangzib. He saw him on two separate occasions. He had been admitted to an audience of the emperor in his quarters when he was encamped in the Deccan: 'He saw an old man with a white beard, trimmed round, contrasting vividly with his olive skin. He was of low stature, with a large nose, slender and stooping with age.' He saw him again at the public audience in the great reception tent which, as usual with the camps of Oriental potentates to this day, was within a court enclosed on all sides by canvas walls: and this is his description: 'The Mogul appeared leaning on a crutched staff, preceded by several nobles. He was simply attired in a white robe, tied under the right arm with a silk sash from which his dagger hung. On his head was a white turban with a gold web, on which an emerald of a vast bigness appeared amidst four little ones. His shoes were after the Moorish fashion, and his legs naked without hose. When he was seated they gave him

his scimitar and buckler, which he laid down on his left side within the throne. He made a sign with his hand for those that had business to draw near; who being come up, two secretaries, standing took their petitions, which they delivered to the king, telling him their contents. I admired to see him endorse them with his own hand, without spectacles, and by his cheerful smiling countenance seem to be pleased with the employment.' This sketch of a great ruler may fittingly be concluded with the noble Apologia of his biographer: '"Every plan that he formed came to little good; every enterprise failed." Such is the comment of the Muhammadan historian on the career of the sovereign whom he justly extols for his "devotion, austerity, and justice", and his "incomparable courage, long-suffering and judgement". Aurangzib's life had been a vast failure indeed, but he had failed grandly. He had pitted his conscience against the world, and the world had triumphed over it. He had marked out a path of duty and had steadfastly pursued it, in spite of its utter impracticability. The man of the world smiles at his short-sighted policy, his ascetic ideal, his zeal for the truth as he saw it. Aurangzib would have found his way smooth and strewn with roses had he been able to become a man of the world. His glory is that he could not force his soul, that he dared not desert the colours of his faith. He lived and died in leading a forlorn hope, and if ever the cross of heroic devotion to a lost cause belonged to mortal man, it was his. The great Puritan of India was of such stuff as wins the martyr's crown.'

CHAPTER V

THE HINDU RECONQUEST OF INDIA

Madhava Rao Scindia, 1730–1794

One of the most fascinating chapters in the history of India is that which deals with the annals of the Mahrattas. Few books are more interesting than Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*, and Broughton's *Letters from a Mahratta Camp*. The special reason for the fascination that Mahratta annals will always have on the imagination of men lies largely in the personalities of some of the men and women of Mahratta race. The great hero amongst the Mahrattas themselves will always be Sivaji, who has been regarded as the founder of the Mahratta nationality. To this day he is regarded as a demigod, and what is known as the cult of Sivaji now prevails not only over the whole of the Deccan, but what is still more curious, over that country which suffered so long from Mahratta excursions and alarms, the regions of Bengal. Bards still go about the country recounting his deeds of prowess, and the temples throughout the lands where Mahratta influence extends, may be seen any evening thronged with Mahratta youth all engaged in reciting hymns in his honour; and while in other parts of the country the imaginations of Hindu youth are fed on the legendary tales of the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, those of Mahratta youth are fired by the tales told of the exploits of their hero Sivaji, some based on historical fact, others as legendary as those of the great Indian epics, and embroidered, as only Hindu bards and priests know how to embroider, with all the art of poetic embellishment. And there is, after all, much in Sivaji's character to attract his countrymen. He was not only a type of the dashing guerrilla captain, but a champion of the gods of his country. Such a combination of patriotism with religious zeal will always attract. European history

also knows the power of a name where such qualities are united in one personality.

In the early part of the seventeenth century, one Shahji Bhonsla, a Rajput soldier of fortune, collected round him a small band of Hindu outlaws. Sivaji was this man's son, and with the formation by him of a national party out of the Hindu tribes of south-western India, the real history of the Mahrattas commences. This party formed the nucleus of what afterwards became the formidable military confederation, the real founder of which was Balaji Baji Rao, whom Sir Alfred Lyall has described as ' the ablest of those hereditary Peshwas or prime ministers who long kept their royal family in a State prison '.

Sivaji found his opportunity in the rivalry between the Mogul emperors and the independent Muhammadan kingdoms of Golconda and Bijapur in southern India, and he managed skilfully and adroitly to play these powers off one against the other, and in the process he carved out for himself a considerable principality. He had the advantage which the Muhammadan powers, as practically foreigners among an alien population, did not have, of being able to draw practically inexhaustible levies from the hardy Hindu peasants of south-western and central India. These levies followed the seasons of the agricultural year ; they were collected together in the intervals of the harvests, and were disbanded again during actual agricultural operations ; they fought on small ponies armed only with spears, and their tactics were always of the guerrilla type. It has been said that there was much in common between the methods of Sivaji and those of the great Sikh Maharaja, Ranjit Singh : both won supremacy by their force of character, and by the practice of the same methods of treachery and rapacity and unscrupulousness, methods, it is only fair to say, common to their age, and by hard personal fighting ; but here the comparison must end. The contrast between the Sikhs and the Mahrattas lies in their respective mottoes. The watchword of the Sikh was ' Honour ', and the pay he looked for ' Renown '. The watchword and pay alike of the Mahratta were ' Plunder and Spoil '. But Sivaji was something more than a military adventurer, he had been brought up from early

childhood in the straitest sect of Hinduism, and was thoroughly versed in the mythological and legendary stories current among his own countrymen, and imbued with an intense hatred of the Muhammadans, a feeling which it is needless to say was fully reciprocated by that great champion of Islam, the Emperor Aurangzib. No devout Hindu, even if he is not a Brahman himself, can afford to neglect the giving of alms to the members of this great hierarchy. One of Sivaji's first acts on having himself crowned king, a ceremony he went through twice, was to have himself weighed against gold, and the gold distributed amongst Brahmans. This was a specially politic act on his part, as the Brahman hierarchy have always been the great mainstay of the Mahratta power. It is said that to this day a similar custom prevails in the State of Travancore in southern India. The Mogul emperors are credited with having introduced the fashion into India. In his religious zeal, Sivaji, on the occasion of his coronation, characteristically adopted Sanskrit in place of the older Persian designations for the functionaries of his State; this he did in order to mark the Hindu character of his sovereignty. It would be a curious speculation as to whether, supposing the Mahrattas had established that ascendancy over India that they at one time aimed at, Sanskrit might not again have revived as a living language and be found now the official language of the country, and the sole medium for the higher education of Hindu and indeed Muhammadan youth. It is interesting to note that an English merchant was present on the occasion, and received from Sivaji permission to trade within the limits of his newly inaugurated sovereignty. There was much also in Sivaji that attracted men personally to him. Even his greatest opponent, the Emperor Aurangzib, could say of him, 'He was a great captain, and the only one who has had the magnanimity to raise up a new kingdom, while I have been endeavouring to destroy the ancient sovereignties of India. My armies have been employed against him for nineteen years, and, nevertheless, his state has been always increasing.' A pleasing picture of Sivaji during his late years has been given by another of his Muhammadan opponents; he speaks of him as 'the

kindly and sympathetic hero, sitting on a bench near a well at his own capital of Rajgarh, chatting to the women who came to draw water, as to his own mother and sisters, and giving their children fruit with his own hands '.

Another great name in Mahratta annals is that of the subject of this sketch, the Maharaja Patel Madhava Rao Scindia, or as he has been more familiarly styled, Madhoji. Sir Alfred Lyall has given in picturesque language the condition of things in India that enabled such a man as Scindia to come to the front, and to attain that position of pre-eminence in northern India that Sivaji had at one time attained in south-western India; and to gain from the Mogul emperor the proud title of Vicegerent of the Empire. 'Thirty years after Aurangzib's decease, Nadir Shah, the Persian soldier of fortune, who had overturned the ruling dynasty in Persia, came down through the Afghan passes with a great army. The Mogul emperor made but a show of resistance: Nadir Shah sacked Delhi, added one more massacre to the bloodstained annals of that ill-fated city, wrenched away from the imperial crown all its possessions west of the Indus, and departed home, leaving the Mogul government, which had received its deathblow, in a state of mortal collapse. The barriers having been thus broken down, Ahmad Shah, of the Abdali tribe of the Afghans, followed two years later. When Nadir Shah had been assassinated by the Persians in his camp in Khorasan, Ahmad Shah, who commanded a large body of cavalry in Nadir Shah's army, rode off eastward to conquer Afghanistan; and from that base he seized the whole Punjab between 1748 and 1751. Meanwhile, from the south-west, the Mahrattas were spreading over Central India like a devastating flood; and wherever the land had been levelled flat by the steam-roller of absolutism, wherever the minor rulerships and petty states had been crushed out by the empire, the whole country was now easily overrun and broken up into anarchy. The different provinces and viceroyalties went their own natural way: they were parcelled out in a scuffle among revolted governors, rebellious chiefs, leaders of insurgent tribes or sects, religious revivalists, or captains of mercenary bands. The Indian people were becoming a masterless

multitude swaying to and fro in the political storm and clinging to any power, natural or supernatural, that seemed likely to protect them. They were prepared to acquiesce in the assumption of authority by any one who could show himself able to discharge the most elementary functions of government in the preservation of life and property. In short the people were scattered without a leader or protector; while the political system under which they had long lived was disappearing in complete disorganization.'

Madhava Rao Scindia was one of the five sons of a man who claimed noble descent; the family fortunes had, however, fallen low till this man, Ranoji by name, who was a private trooper in the bodyguard of one of the Peshwas, and who held the hereditary office of slipper-bearer to the Peshwas, succeeded in raising them again. He had attracted the attention of his master under the following circumstances. The Peshwa was one day visiting the Raja, and in accordance with Oriental etiquette he had left his shoes outside the audience chamber. When he came out he found Ranoji asleep, but with the shoes fast clasped to his breast. In recognition of his fidelity he made him an officer, and gave him a military fief in northern Malwa. Ranoji became a Silladar or leader of partisan horse, and fixed his head quarters for some time at Ujjain. But his real opportunity came under the great Peshwa, Balaji Baji Rao, under whose vigorous rule the Mahrattas succeeded in conquering all Malwa, in seizing Delhi, and in establishing for a time a Mahratta administration in the Punjab. Their occupation of the Punjab, Sir Alfred Lyall has said, 'marked the apogee of Mahratta pre-eminence, the Deccan horses had quenched their thirst in the waters of the Indus, but it also marked the turning-point and ebb of their fortunes. By such a bold stroke for the possession of north India, they overreached themselves, for the effort drew them very far from their base: the Muhammadans were numerous and hardy in the north, and the Mahrattas had now provoked in Ahmad Shah a much more formidable antagonist than any of those whom they had heretofore encountered.' Though the Mahrattas were eventually driven out of the Punjab, as the result of the great battle fought on the plains of

Panipat, near Delhi, in 1761, they kept their hold on Malwa. The Peshwa, in the course of the progress of the Mahratta armies northward, had parcelled out this important tract between Ranoji Scindia and Mulharji Holkar: to the latter he gave the southern half of the province, to the former the northern. Thus the old patent of nobility was restored to the Scindia family, and their fortunes assured. Ranoji, as related, had been a slipper-bearer, and Mulharji a shepherd. It is interesting to note how some of the most distinguished ruling families in India have gone through such vicissitudes of fortune. The same is the case with another great Mahratta house: the present Gaikwar of Baroda is, by descent, one of the sons of the soil.

Madhoji was present at the battle of Panipat in the capacity of commander of a contingent of cavalry. Sir Alfred Lyall has given a graphic account of the battle: 'This was the greatest pitched battle that had been fought for several centuries between Hindus and Muhammadans. Twenty-eight thousand Afghan horsemen rode with the Abdali, whose army was brought up to a total of 80,000 horse and foot by large bodies of infantry from his own dominions, and by the contingents of the Indian Muhammadans. The regular troops of the Mahrattas were reckoned at 75,000 horse and 15,000 infantry: 15,000 Pindaris, or roving freebooters, followed their standard: a countless swarm of armed banditti thronged their camp: and they had not less than 200 guns. The artillery on both sides included strong rocket batteries. The Mahrattas who issued at dawn from their entrenched camp, having eaten their last rations, with dishevelled turbans, and faces smeared with turmeric, as men devoted to death, rushed to the attack, and at first carried all before them in their furious onset. They broke through the lines of Persian musketeers, camel gunners, and light cavalry. The right wing of the Afghan army was thrown into confusion; its centre gave way under the crushing artillery fire. Ahmad Shah's vizier, in an agony of rage and despair, strove vainly to stem the torrent. But the Afghan commander was a man of courage and high capacity. Dressed in full armour, he dismounted, coolly rallied his men on foot,

brought up his reserves to the last man, and commanded a desperate charge, sword in hand, in close order, at full gallop, whereupon they went storming down right upon the Mahratta centre under a shower of rockets. The Mahrattas fought bravely for a short time, but their leader was killed or fled, their line was broken, and they were utterly routed with enormous slaughter.' Madhoji himself barely escaped with his life: he was riding a light Deccani mare, and was pursued by a gigantic Afghan trooper mounted on a big bony up-country horse: the mare fell in attempting to clear a ditch: the Afghan trooper, after first showing what he thought of an infidel by spitting in Madhoji's face, dealt him a blow on his knee which crippled him for life, and then rode off after robbing him of his costly apparel and ornaments. He was saved from death by exhaustion by the opportune arrival of a Muhammadan bhisti, or water-carrier, who placed him on his pakhal bullock, as the animals are called whose part in life it is to carry the huge water-skins which the water-carriers take about with them, and conveyed him to a place of safety. As Madhoji rose in the world he raised this man who had given him such timely succour, Rana Khan by name, also to a place of prominence, and he promoted him to the rank of a general officer in his armies. Madhoji is said never to have forgotten a benefit or an injury, and he certainly in his future career showed that he bore his Muhammadan opponents no goodwill for the permanent disablement they had been the cause of inflicting upon him. The news of the Mahratta defeat at Panipat is said to have been taken to the Peshwa by a messenger in the employ of a banker attached to the Grand Army, as the Peshwa's army had been styled. To this day bankers are the means of the rapid dissemination of important news, it is indeed part of their business to have their fingers, so to speak, on the pulse of public opinion. The message was characteristically enigmatic, but the Peshwa read in it the ruin of the Mahratta cause and of all Mahratta hopes of supremacy. 'Two pearls have been melted: twenty-seven gold mohurs have been lost, of silver and copper the totals cannot be cast up.' The Peshwa, indeed, never recovered from the shock, and

died a few short months after, practically of a broken heart. One result of the battle to Madhoji was that he was the sole survivor of his race, and thus succeeded to his father's principality.

Madhoji has been described as 'a statesman and soldier of almost unsurpassed ability', and he will always take high rank as a Ruler of India. The country at the time needed such men. The constant fighting that had been going on so long already on the soil of Hindustan had led to the demoralization of a people. A native writer bears testimony to this fact, and the account he gives reads almost like a page out of Thucydides. 'The people of Hindustan at this period thought only of personal safety and gratification. Misery was disregarded by those that escaped it, and man centred solely in self, felt not for his kind. This selfishness, destructive of virtue both public and private, became universal in Hindustan after the invasion of Nadir Shah.' About the same time that Madhoji thus succeeded to his father's principality in northern Malwa, a great Mahratta lady, Ahalya Bai, became, by the death of her son, queen-regent of the southern principality, the head quarters of which was Indore. Ahalya Bai was one of those women of India who have from time to time come to the front and shown great administrative ability and business capacity. Such an one is the present distinguished Begum of Bhopal. The Peshwas of Puna still claimed suzerainty over the fiefs of Malwa, and their claim was generally conceded, but both Madhoji and Ahalya Bai took an independent line in connexion with the succession at Indore. Ahalya Bai had been ordered to adopt a successor to her son as ruler of Indore, but she had refused, and Madhoji had then been ordered to attack her and compel her obedience to the orders of the Puna regent; he also had refused. Ahalya Bai proceeded to administer her territory, and she did so with marked success. She made Indore, which was then only a village, her capital. It speaks well for Madhoji Scindia's generosity of heart, a trait that indeed seems always to have characterized him, that he did thus refuse to take up arms against the house of his father's old comrade-in-arms. His generosity was rewarded by the help that Ahalya Bai was after-

wards able to afford him, in furthering the definite plans he had now formed of carving out a dominion for himself, not only in Central India, but in Hindustan proper. But the time had not yet come when he could play entirely for his own hand, and though he had but recently refused to carry out certain orders emanating from Puna because they conflicted with his own sense of justice, he still remained the most faithful servant of the Peshwas. Indeed, it was characteristic of him that even when he afterwards became sovereign lord of Hindustan, he still posed as such: indeed, it became almost a proverb among the Mahrattas, that 'Madhoji made himself a sovereign by calling himself a servant'. A celebrated preacher may have had this Mahratta saying in his mind when, preaching at a great thanksgiving service on the occasion of the return of the Prince and Princess of Wales from their historic tour in India, he made this noble utterance: 'The British rule their great Empire, not by calling themselves servants, but by making themselves the servants of the peoples they govern.' Madhoji accompanied the Mahratta army that had been sent by the Puna Darbar to operate against the Jats of Bhartpur, and to march on Delhi. He commanded in person a compact body of 15,000 horsemen, and a similar body under the command of Ahalya Bai's able general, Takuji, also accompanied the force. The Jat power at this time extended from Agra to Alwar. Having completed their subjection, the Mahrattas moved on to the neighbourhood of Delhi, where they remained encamped for a considerable time without entering the city.

Delhi was at this time ruled in the name of the Mogul emperor by a man who had been placed there as his Prime Minister by the influence of Ahmad Shah Abdali. This man's name was Najib-ud-Daulah, who will always hold a high place amongst Muhammadan officials for his ability and capacity for government. Mr. Vansittart, who was for a time President of the British settlement in Bengal, wrote of him: 'Najib-ud-Daulah was the only example in Hindustan of a character at once great and good.' The Mahrattas, whose ostensible object in thus appearing before Delhi was to obtain the right of collecting chauth, or one-fourth of the revenues in the territories where they

had established their influence, lying between the Chambal and the Jumna rivers, entered into negotiations with Najib. He was sagacious enough to realize that conciliation was his best policy at the time; and he accepted an invitation to visit the Mahratta camp, taking with him his son, Zabita Khan. It is recorded that he placed his son's hand in that of the Mahratta general, Takuji, and requested his protection for him. His efforts to conciliate Madhoji, however, proved fruitless. The reply of that great chief was characteristic: 'I require revenge for so much desolation, and so many deaths, for the blood of my brothers and my nephew, and my own perpetual mutilation, nor am I satisfied because my friend chooses to make this Muhammadan noble his brother.' The real object of the Mahrattas, however, was the restoration to his throne at Delhi of the Mogul emperor, and with the death of Najib-ud-Daulah their opportunity came. Najib's son, Zabita, a weak and worthless individual, was easily brushed aside, and the Mahratta chiefs then occupied the palace at Delhi, and opened formal negotiations with the Mogul emperor. This was in 1771, just before Warren Hastings entered upon the government of Bengal. The emperor at the time was a pensioner of the British, and was living under their protection at Allahabad. The overtures made to him by the Mahrattas through the tactful Takuji proved to be opportune. The emperor is recorded to have been chafing under the restraints put upon him, and he appears to have had some reason for complaint, if it is true, as is stated, that the British commandant, finding his rest disturbed by the barbaric strains of the emperor's palace band, had ordered him to discontinue it. Any one knowing the customs prevailing in Native courts would at once realize the impolicy, to say the least of it, of such interference. One of the most prominent features of all Oriental courts, great and small, is the great archway at the entrance to the palace over which is located the bandstand, or, as it is styled in Indian parlance, the music room; morning, noon, and night, at the hours of prayer and of high festival, the strains of barbaric music are wafted to every corner of the palace. The household, indeed, awakes to the sound of strident instruments, and

retires to rest with it as a lullaby. In the large towns under British administration the hours within the limits of which music is allowed are carefully regulated by municipal bylaws; but, on occasions of high festivals, these are practically ignored, and no notice is taken of their breach. An amusing story is told of a former administrator of an Indian province, who has since been a noted public servant in Ireland, and is now a peer of the realm. He had issued orders that no restrictions were to be placed on musical performances on the occasion of high days and holidays. On one occasion he was touring through his province and encamped in the immediate outskirts of a large town. The president of the local municipality asked the District officer whether, though the occasion was one of high festival in the native town, music was to cease at a reasonable hour, as the Lord Sahib was coming, 'By no means,' said the District officer; 'his lordship's special commands are that the people may make as much noise as they like on such occasions; encourage it, therefore, don't stop it.' The Lord Sahib duly turned up, and sent for the District officer the first thing in the morning, and complained bitterly to him of his rest having been much disturbed by the noise in the native town overnight. The District officer referred to the letter of instructions issued under the sign-manual of the Governor; and he had no more to say. A good deal of importance is attached by Oriental princes to their State bands. It is no uncommon thing for a Resident in Native States or a favoured guest to hear, as he takes his drives abroad, the familiar strains of the English National Anthem issuing from the instruments of a band located at some corner of the highway which it is known that the carriage will pass. A Maharani, known to the writer, when sending her son to be admitted into a college, expressed a wish that he should be played in by her State band. Some of these Oriental potentates are possessed of the temperament of a Saul, and they require the services of many a David to charm away their melancholy. The writer has seen something of Oriental kings in exile, and he can vouch for it that in these days their amusements and recreations are not interfered with. Some of their recreations are harmless

enough; others may prove a menace to the neighbourhood. The writer lived opposite one of these uncrowned monarchs for some years, but fortunately a broad river flowed between his domain and that of the monarch. One of his favourite amusements was to take the air on the broad terrace of his palace and watch the beautiful and graceful flight of many thousands of pigeons as they wheeled and circled in the air in vast squadrons. But he also kept a menagerie, and the escape of one of his full-blooded young tigers, which swam across the river early one morning and proceeded to maul the first man he encountered, who happened to be a European, and to kill some cattle, caused some considerable alarm throughout the countryside, but provided excellent sport. The tiger was disposed of after a moonlight vigil. Another of these exiled monarchs, having no menagerie of his own, periodically descends into nature's menagerie in the jungles at the foot of the mountains where he has made his home, and he and his party shoot indiscriminately at every head of game they come across, much to the chagrin of the true sportsman. The Mahrattas were successful in their overtures, and notwithstanding the remonstrances of the British, and the earnest advice to the contrary that he received from the Nawab Vizier of Oudh, the emperor left his retreat at Allahabad and proceeded to Delhi. Madhoji was entrusted with the duty of escorting the emperor to his capital, where he arrived almost on the last day of the year 1771. Madhoji saw in this move an important step taken towards the accomplishment of his own great design of securing the sovereignty of Hindustan for himself. As Sir Alfred Lyall has said: 'The Mahrattas treated the Mogul's kingship as a mere pageant, using his name as a pretext for seizing more districts, and leaving him almost destitute in the midst of a plentiful camp.'

Madhoji Scindia did not remain long at Delhi. The Mahratta armies moved out to follow up the refugee Prime Minister, Zabita Khan, whose excesses committed in the palace during his short period of power, demanded just retribution; but unfortunately chastisement fell on the wrong individual. Zabita Khan fled on the approach of the Mahrattas into Rohilkhand, leaving his family and

treasure at the mercy of the Mahrattas; and his son received the punishment that should have been meted out to the father. Madhoji, having disapproved of negotiations being opened up by the other Mahratta chiefs with Zabita Khan, who they thought might prove a more pliable tool than the minister who had succeeded him, left the main army and withdrew into Rajputana. The Mogul emperor had marched from Delhi for some distance with the Mahratta armies, accompanied by his *corps d'élite* of young nobles who formed his bodyguard, but when he found himself being treated with scant courtesy by the Mahratta chiefs, he had left them and returned to Delhi. His *corps d'élite* was the forerunner of that corps which, created by Lord Curzon, is styled the Imperial Cadet Corps. This is the *corps d'élite* which, in these days, has the honour of acting on occasions of State ceremonial as escort to the representatives of the modern successors of the Mogul emperors, and whose appearance with their gallant bearing, their handsome white buff uniforms, and their coal-black chargers, with their leopard-skin saddle-cloths, excites the admiration of all who see them when they take their rides abroad. A new chapter in the history of the career of the great Mahratta chieftain was now about to open: he was for the first time to come into contact with the British. He and the British Governor-General were to play a great game, and after a trial of strength, which was to bring out the characteristic traits of both, the great game was to end practically in a draw, with the advantage, if anything, on the side of the Mahratta.

While in Rajputana, Madhoji and the other chiefs had received an urgent message from the Peshwa, Madhava Rao, begging them to come to his assistance, as he was alarmed at the ambitious designs of his uncle, commonly known as Raghoba. Before they set out, however, the crisis had arrived. The Peshwa died suddenly, and Raghoba assumed the title and office of Peshwa. The ministers of the late Peshwa had meanwhile removed out of harm's way the widow and her infant son, who was now in his turn proclaimed Peshwa. Thus, as has so often been the case in southern India, a war of succession was threatened.

The Bombay Government took advantage of the crisis to make a treaty with Raghoba, by which they obtained the cession of the long-coveted harbour of Bassein and the island of Salsette, in return for a promise of military aid. The British promptly occupied these places, being just in time, it is recorded, to forestall the Portuguese Viceroy of Goa, who was just setting an expedition on foot for their recovery, as he claimed them as Portuguese possessions. It is a well-known saying in India, that in the case of rival claimants he who first gets the ear of the great man will win the day. Raghoba, realizing the all-importance of the aid of Madhoji Scindia, went off to meet him, and he obtained the promise of both his support and that of Holkar, whom he also met at Indore. But the queen-regent, Ahalya Bai, whose sympathies were naturally with the late Peshwa's widow and her infant son, was soon able to dissuade them from giving Raghoba their active support. They therefore detached themselves from their alliance with Raghoba, and after a short period of observation, they joined forces with the astute leader of Raghoba's opponents, Nana Farnavis. There had been some differences of opinion between the Bombay and the Bengal Governments on the subject of the support of Raghoba, and the latter had at first leaned towards an arrangement with the Puna regency under Nana Farnavis. But that minister had shown his hand too clearly as an inveterate foe to all British policy, and had welcomed at his court a French adventurer, who had given himself out as an envoy from the King of France; orders, moreover, had arrived from England that Raghoba was to be supported. The Bombay Government acted precipitately with the usual result that follows from such action. Their forces, commanded, it has been said, ' by a valetudinarian of ripe years, but raw experience,' encountered those under the command of Madhoji, and were decisively defeated by that able general. The historian records that Madhoji, always urbane and clement, exacted the fullest surrender possible. At the same time, he is said to have expressed his admiration of the gallant bearing of the British soldiers to one of the officers in these terms: ' What soldiers yours are! their line is like a red brick wall, and when

one falls another steps into the gap. I hope some day to fight on the same side'; and he added, 'Such are the troops that I should like to have.' It is further said, that from this time he began to hesitate in a scheme he had been maturing of forming a general combination of the Mahratta confederacy against the English.

While Madhoji was undecided as to the attitude he should adopt towards the English, there was no indecision in the policy of his great rival in statecraft, Warren Hastings. He knew his man and recognized in him the most powerful chief of the Mahratta confederation. He knew also that he was bound to have a bout with the English before he could make up his mind, and he determined to give him the opportunity. The result was in accordance with his expectations: Sir Alfred Lyall has recorded it: 'After several sharp skirmishes with the English troops, and the loss of the fortress of Gwalior taken by escalade (a brilliant and daring exploit of Captain Popham, one of the forgotten Anglo-Indian heroes), Scindia discovered that his interest lay in coming to an understanding.' If Hastings had known his man, Scindia now recognized the true quality of his great opponent. The great duel was over, and 'never again', records the historian, 'even in the weakest period of Shore and Cornwallis, did Scindia appear in arms against the British, or fail in respect to their expressed claims or wishes. It is a prime characteristic of Warren Hastings that, whatever he did was done for good, he never built with bad materials or on foundations of sand. It is equally characteristic of Scindia that he never, when once he had learnt them, forgot the limits of his own strength.'

The generous policy pursued by Warren Hastings in his final negotiations with Scindia met with its own reward. Having determined to remain on good terms with the British, Scindia showed his goodwill in a very handsome manner, and he intervened actively in bringing about a Treaty of peace between the British and the Mahratta Power. Of the Treaty of Salbai, signed in 1782, the historian has said: 'This Treaty marked an epoch in history. It was by means of that Treaty that, without annexing a square mile of territory, the British Power

became virtually paramount in the greater part of the Indian peninsula, every province of which, with the exception of Mysore, acknowledged that Power as the great universal peacemaker. It was no mean title.' It is no insignificant testimony to Scindia's character, and reputation for honesty of purpose, that the astute Brahman who controlled affairs at Puna, Nana Farnavis, should have consented to his thus acting as plenipotentiary for the British in the cause of peace. At the same time it must not be forgotten that Scindia had obtained very excellent terms for himself. He had now what he particularly wanted, a free hand in Central India and Hindustan. It is a striking testimony to the statesmanship of Warren Hastings that he should have realized that it was to the interest of the British, now that the Mogul empire had fallen, and that they had taken such portions of it as were required for their commercial purposes, that the rest of the peninsula should be under the rule most conducive to peace and order, and that rule was evidently Scindia's. The historian has said : ' Hastings, the only British Ruler in India who never made an annexation, secured the interests of his country in the best way by leaving the rest of the country not ruled by the British, setting apart of course the territories of Tipu and the Nizam, in the hands of his wisest and ablest contemporary. In the great competitive examination which had been going on for many years, Scindia had come out first and taken all the prizes.' Hastings followed up the Treaty of Salbai by dispatching a mission to Delhi, as though to publish the new alliance to the world, and his advice to the heir-apparent of the emperor when he subsequently met him at Lucknow, to go to Madhoji Scindia, was all in keeping with his policy of supporting a man whom he had recognized to be a true ruler of men.

The great prize for which Scindia was contending was nothing less than the command of Delhi, and with it of the person of the Mogul emperor. Both he and Warren Hastings had long recognized that the sovereignty of Hindustan would be vested in the Power that possessed this command. Hastings, indeed, had been much tempted, says Sir Alfred Lyall, just before he quitted India for

good, by the project of sending an expedition to Delhi for the purpose of setting up the Great Mogul again on his feet, and of making English influence paramount at his capital. A foreign writer has said: 'The respect for the house of Timur was such, that although the whole peninsula had been gradually drawn from its direct authority there was not a prince in India who dared call himself king. Shah Alam was still seated on the throne of the Mogul, and all was still done in his name.' The time when the British were to invest themselves with the authority at Delhi that Scindia coveted, was not yet, and he continued therefore on his course undisturbed. But first he had to clear out of his way his old friend and ally, Holkar, in whom he now saw a rival. This he only succeeded in doing after a desperate fight. With his occupation of Agra, and Delhi, and the capture of Aligarh, his supremacy in Hindustan soon became assured. At Delhi he was received in audience by the emperor, who conferred upon him two patents, one appointing the Peshwa, whose humble servant Scindia still professed to be, the nominal Vicegerent of the Empire, the acting Vicegerent being Scindia himself, the other giving him the command of the army as the Peshwa's deputy. At the same time the provinces of Agra and Delhi were assigned to him as security for the pay of the troops. Scindia's political aim in all this, Sir Alfred Lyall has said, was to maintain his own independence of the Mahratta confederation without at the same time dissolving it. It was still to be a powerful weapon to be wielded whenever it might become necessary to arrest the rapidly growing predominance of the British. Scindia was sagacious enough to see that with the appointment of Lord Cornwallis in 1786, the same year that saw himself firmly established in Delhi, and with a large and well-appointed army in occupation of the country round that capital, the status of the British in India had materially changed. Sir Alfred Lyall has recorded the change that had come about: 'In the year 1786 we find the English sovereignty openly established in India under a Governor-General invested with plenary authority by the representatives of the English nation. The transformation of the chief Governorship of a chartered commercial company

into a senatorial proconsulship was now virtually accomplished: and with the accession of Cornwallis there set in a new era of accelerated advance.' Henceforth Scindia seems to have kept before him the possibility of having to form a combination against the English as against a foreign Power which threatened the subjugation of all India. And it is not improbable that had he not died prematurely as he did, that great struggle between the British and the Mahrattas for supremacy that did eventually come about a few short years after his death, might have taken place at an earlier date, when, with such a man as himself to take supreme command for the Mahrattas, its issue might have been more doubtful. One of his first acts on feeling his position assured at Delhi seems to point to this; he demanded from the immediate successor of Warren Hastings, Sir John Macpherson, in the name of His Majesty the Emperor, payment of tribute by the Company for their possessions in Bengal. When he found the British authorities firm on this point, he had the good sense to retire from the position he had taken up, and friendly relations were not disturbed. Indeed, it is recorded that the good temper and judgement he showed in offering explanations won the admiration of the British, and had the effect of practically strengthening the alliance.

Not very far from Delhi to the south there stands picturesquely situated on the high banks of the Jumna, a city which has very sacred associations for all Hindus, Mathura by name. Near it is another place almost as much revered by them as their most holy city of Benares: this is Brindaban, which, with its countless shrines, some of the more ancient in red sandstone, and of simpler if grander architecture than the magnificent modern constructions in white marble, still exercises a fascination over the minds and imaginations of all devout Hindus, mainly owing to its association in their minds with the life history of their popular, if somewhat legendary divinity, Krishna. To Mathura Scindia, feeling his position secure, now retreated: it was always a favourite place of retirement for him, whenever he had plans to mature. He realized that there were many rocks ahead and that he would have to steer very carefully if his recently constructed ship of State were not

to suffer shipwreck altogether. Clouds, indeed, were already gathering, and a storm was eventually to burst which, though it did not cast that ship entirely on the rocks to be broken up, was to temporarily cause it to run hard and fast aground. He knew that the Mogul emperor, though he owed a good deal to him for his considerate treatment, was quite ready to lend a favourable ear to any intrigues against him fomented by his many enemies among the emperor's Muhammadan entourage. He was destined also to make enemies of many of the brave and chivalrous Rajput clans. Meditating on all this, it occurred to him that he might take a lesson from the English. He had seen something of their methods, and what an important place commerce held in their policy : he had also noted the advantage to be derived from the possession of a well-disciplined standing army as against the feudal system on which he had hitherto had to depend. He had himself had experience of the perfection of discipline to which even Indian troops could be brought under a proper system of training under skilled European officers, and he determined to take a leaf out of the English book, just as the English had taken one out of the French book. Above all, he realized the importance of the choice of fit agents to help him carry out his plans. He had indeed always realized this; he would not have been the statesman and ruler of men that he had already proved himself to be, had he not done so. He had the power, given only to a few, and to those few only because of their commanding genius and personality, of attracting the ablest men to his service, and of retaining their loyalty and, indeed, winning their affection ; and one reason for this was largely the fact that having once chosen his man, he trusted him implicitly. The first thing he did, therefore, on emerging from his retirement, was to look out for such a suitable agent. He was fortunate in finding in the celebrated Frenchman, de Boigne, one such ready to his hand. Scindia had already noted de Boigne as far back as 1783. He was at the time travelling in India and was the bearer of letters of introduction to some of the chiefs of Rajputana from Warren Hastings. He had been endeavouring to get service in the Jaipur State. When he came under the ken of Scindia, he was helping a Jat prince to concert plans

for raising the siege of a fort that Scindia was besieging. Scindia at once saw the merit of the plan suggested by de Boigne. He complained to Warren Hastings of the action of the Frenchman. Warren Hastings thereupon invited the man to visit him at Calcutta, as he wished to have a talk with him. The issue of this conversation was that de Boigne returned to the north and took service with Scindia himself. De Boigne was altogether a remarkable man and Scindia never had reason to regret his choice.

One of the first cares of an administrator is the all-important question of finance, and Scindia had to devise means for raising sufficient revenue to carry on his administration. These measures were destined to bring him into collision with the Rajput clans. In furtherance of his scheme for carrying on a successful commercial enterprise, he found it necessary to keep open communications between his southern principality in Malwa and Delhi. A fort stood in the way of the full accomplishment of his plans : it belonged to a clan of Chauhan Rajputs, as the most blue-blooded of this historic race are styled, the head of which claimed to be the Hindupat or sovereign lord of the Hindus : it was a claim based upon his lineal descent from the famous Hindu monarch, Prithiraj. Scindia succeeded in his enterprise, and obtained possession of the fort, but his action did not tend to conciliate the Rajputs. One incident that occurred during the progress of the operations speaks highly for the chivalry of this noble race. Scindia's wife was journeying at the time from Puna to Mathura : she was accompanied by the wives and children of many of his officers. It was feared that the Rajputs might surprise and cut up the escort. Scindia thereupon wrote to the Diwan of the Bhopal State, and at his intercession the Rajput chieftain, Sher Singh, who had taken up the cause of his clansman, secured for the travellers an unmolested and honourable passage through the territory of Scindia's opponent. Scindia acknowledged the courtesy in a handsome letter. Financial necessities soon compelled him to take steps which raised all the great Rajput houses against him. In the course of his examination into the titles of the great Jaghirdars, he found many that could not be proved, and he proceeded to resume all such. A formidable

combination was formed against him, headed by the chiefs of Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Udaipur. Other hostile combinations soon followed. Among the agents whom Scindia had been compelled to employ were certain Muhammadans on whom he soon found he could not rely. It is recorded that Scindia's accession to his father's principality had not been altogether pleasing to some of the older adherents of the family, owing to the bar sinister that crossed his escutcheon : and they had shown their displeasure in such a way that Scindia had to look elsewhere for agents than to the men of his own State. Among these was a Muhammadan, Ismail Beg by name. This man took the opportunity of an engagement with the allied Rajputs, of deserting with all his great force of horsemen and footmen and his powerful artillery, to the enemy, with the result that after three days' hard fighting, Scindia had to retire before the victorious Rajputs to his own fortress of Gwalior, accompanied by his faithful French henchman. He managed to retire, however, in good order. He is said to have sent off an express to Puna to ask the Peshwa for reinforcements 'for the common cause of Maharashtra '. But the Peshwa was not too eager to assist the cause of a man who was aiming, he well knew, not only at political, but also at commercial supremacy. Indeed, the rock on which the unity of the Mahratta confederacy was to split was the mutual jealousy created by their commercial rivalry.

A new enemy now appeared at Delhi itself in the person of that son of the former Pathan premier of Delhi, Ghulam Kadir by name, whom, it has been already related, the Mahrattas caught hold of when in pursuit of his father, and maltreated. He had nursed his revenge, but soon had the opportunity of satiating it to the full, not on the Mahrattas, but on the person of their pensioner, the Mogul emperor. This man succeeded in obtaining a commanding position at Delhi for a time, and the Mahratta garrison left by Scindia had to retire. The emperor had been playing fast and loose with Scindia : he had been intriguing both in secret and openly, and Scindia determined to leave him severely alone and let him learn a lesson : and very badly was the emperor destined to fare at the hands of his new so-called friends, the Muhammadan nobles, Ismail Beg, and

Ghulam Kadir, who had for the time joined hands together, each in pursuit of his own ends. They had made up their minds that the emperor had much treasure concealed in the palace, and when fair means failed them they had recourse to the foulest. The man Ghulam Kadir was the principal agent in the inhuman treatment accorded the emperor: he had intercepted a letter which the emperor had written to Scindia to implore his aid, and made it the lever for fresh cruelties. His brutality culminated in his having the eyes of the emperor cut out by the knives of his Pathans. But Nemesis soon arrived. His old companion, Ismail Beg, had deserted a cause so discreditable, and had again joined hands with Scindia's faithful commander, the quondam water-carrier, Rana Khan. They drove Ghulam Kadir out of Delhi and pursued him closely: some peasants gave him up, and he was sent under escort to Scindia, who had begun to re-establish his ascendancy and had recovered Agra and was again in his old retreat at Mathura. On the way he fell out with his escort, who meted out to him still worse treatment than he had accorded the emperor. They put out his eyes, mutilated him, and finally hanged him on a tree by the wayside. Scindia had the mangled trunk sent to the sightless old emperor at Delhi, 'surely,' says the historian, 'the most ghastly offering that was ever presented in that beautiful audience-chamber of the Moguls, the Diwan-i-Khass, or hall of private audience.' The emperor is recorded to have endured his sufferings with that dignity and fortitude that became his exalted position. He was a bit of a poet and philosopher: and he gave vent to his feelings in this plaintive ode:

I see none but Thee, O Most High! to have pity on me.
Yet peradventure, Timur Shah, my kinsman, may come to my aid.
And Madhoji Scindia, who is as a son to me, will avenge my cause.
Asaf-ad-Daulah also! and the chiefs of the English, they too may come to my relief.
Shame were it if princes and nobles gathered not together,
To the end that they might bring me help.

Scindia's first care on being restored to his own again was

the reorganization of his army. De Boigne, having seen his master safely through his darkest hour, had obtained his permission to leave his service for a time: and had since been working at his own indigo concern near Lucknow. Scindia, anxious to have his services again, now offered him the appointment of General Commandant. De Boigne accepted ; his first duty was to quell a mutiny of the troops, which he succeeded in effecting by the exercise of judicious tact. Scindia had just reorganized his army when he found himself confronting a hostile combination of Rajputs and Moguls. He succeeded in preventing a junction of the forces, and with the help of the strategy of de Boigne and another distinguished Frenchman, Perron, he beat them in detail, but not till after a gallant struggle on the part of the Rajputs. It is interesting to note that the Rajput chieftain of Jodhpur made an attempt to win de Boigne over to the Rajput alliance. He offered him as a bribe the town of Ajmir and the surrounding country : but he did not know his man : he mistook him for a mere military adventurer. De Boigne's grim reply to the offer was 'that Scindia had already bestowed upon him not only Ajmir, but all the territories of Jaipur and Jodhpur'. When the Rajput chiefs finally submitted, the great fortress of Taragarh, which overlooks Ajmir, surrendered to Scindia. To maintain his supreme position Scindia augmented his army, and especially the legion which he had placed under the command of de Boigne : he assigned a large tract of country extending southwards from Delhi to Mathura for its support. A military historian has given a remarkable testimony to the character of this gallant Frenchman : 'It is not the least of the advantages arising from de Boigne's merit that in his military capacity he should have softened, by means of an admirable perseverance, the ferocious and almost savage character of the Mahrattas. He submitted to the discipline and to the civilization of European armies soldiers who, till then, had been regarded as barbarians, and to such an extent did he succeed that the rapacious license which had formerly been common among them came at last to be looked upon as infamous, even by the meanest soldier.' De Boigne was something more than a military genius : in the administration of the territory which Scindia

had assigned for the upkeep of his legion, he showed that he possessed the very highest qualities of the civil administrator. The same writer who wrote of his military capacity, wrote thus of his administrative ability : 'It was de Boigne who made it possible for Scindia to rule in Hindustan at the same time that he was controlling the councils of Puna. It was de Boigne who introduced into the North-West Provinces the germs of that civil administration which the English have since successfully developed.'

Scindia's attention was now again attracted to Puna. He had certain reasons for being somewhat uneasy at a recent change in the political situation which had been created in India by the alliance formed between the Peshwa, at the instance of his shrewd Brahman minister, Nana Farnavis, and the British, for the ostensible purpose of participating in the campaign which Lord Cornwallis had set on foot against Tipu, Sultan of Mysore. Scindia, it is recorded, had offered his own services to Lord Cornwallis, only stipulating that he might be allowed two battalions of British soldiers to serve as his bodyguard : but to his chagrin his offer had been refused. When he heard of the new turn of events, therefore, he determined that his presence was necessary at Puna. He also had a further object : he wanted to see for himself what Takuji Holkar was about at Indore. He travelled to Puna by way of Malwa : and his suspicions were aroused when he found the Indore chief engaged in forming an army on the model of his own. The famous queen-regent, Ahalya Bai, was now growing old. Scindia had an opportunity of seeing the great work she had achieved : she had been a most vigorous ruler, and the period of her rule, and that which followed for some years after, while the effect of her rule still remained, was known as 'The golden age of Malwa'. A female contemporary of Ahalya Bai has thus described her : 'Ahalya Bai is not beautiful, but the light of Heaven is upon her face.' Scindia had not been long absent from his dominions when his suspicions of the attitude of the Holkar chief were justified. He made a determined effort in combination with Scindia's old enemy, Ismail Beg, to dispute with Scindia the supremacy of Hindustan. His designs were only finally frustrated by the efforts of de Boigne and Perron, backed up by his

great Mahratta general, Lakwa Dada. As long as Scindia lived, no further attempt was made to dispute his authority in Hindustan. His authority was recognized as extending from the boundaries of the Punjab to the frontiers of Rohilkhand, and from the river Jumna to the banks of the Nerbudda. But the Deccan was still closed against him, and so long as this was the case, he could not feel his position secure : and in his desire to attain a position of supremacy in the Deccan may be seen the secret of his offer to Lord Cornwallis to take part in the campaign against Tipu, and of his visit to Puna, where he hoped to obtain a position of ascendancy over the youthful Peshwa. The wily and astute Nana Farnavis saw through all this, for Scindia was a man of transparent honesty, and he was no match for the man who has been styled the Mahratta Machiavelli. From the day, therefore, that Scindia set foot in Puna those secret intrigues commenced that thwarted his plans, and doubtless were not without their influence in bringing about his premature death, for he never left Puna alive : he arrived there in the month of June, 1792, and in February, 1794, he died suddenly, and under somewhat suspicious circumstances. But without actually charging the Nana with hiring assassins to bring about his death, the British historian contents himself with saying 'The death of Madhoji was an event of great political importance, as he was inimical to the overgrown ascendancy of the Brahmans'.

It has been said by a writer that the true index to the character of this great Mahratta chieftain was a characteristic which he had inherited from his ancestors, contentment with the substance of power and a contempt for the trappings of State. So long as the real power was his he was willing to forgo the title. This characteristic, indeed, he shared with others of his race. And yet another characteristic he possessed which is common to many a great man, and not alone to those of Oriental origin. This was a love of theatrical display. These two characteristics received perhaps their best illustration on the occasion of the two Darbars which the Peshwa gave in his honour soon after his arrival in Puna. The account which his biographer has given of what happened at these is amusing and inter-

esting. The scene on the first day showed Scindia in his characteristic attitude of assumed humility: the scene on the second day showed him as impressing the minds of the multitude with his real power. Simplicity, it has been said, was the order of the day at the first Darbar, magnificence the key-note of the second Darbar. The scene at the first Darbar has been thus described :—'The virtual sovereign ruler of Hindustan, victorious in war or diplomacy over all opponents, lord of vast provinces and of unconquered legions, he approached the State enclosure on foot, leaving his elephant and his bodyguard of grenadiers under European officers at the confines of his own camp. On entering the Darbar tent he took his station below all the officials present. When the Peshwa appeared, Scindia made his obeisance with the rest, and declining the invitation to be seated, produced a bundle, out of which he unwrapped a pair of new slippers. "This," he was heard to murmur, "was my father's occupation and it must also be mine." Then reverently removing the slippers which the young chief had been wearing, he wrapped them in the cloth from which he had taken the new pair, and having laid them before the Peshwa, permitted himself to accept the reiterated invitation to be seated, still carrying the Peshwa's old shoes under his arm'. On the occasion of the second Darbar, 'he formally invested the Peshwa with the office of the Vicegerent of the Empire, and with its symbolical insignia, exhibiting at the same time the patents from the emperor, one of which made the office of deputy hereditary in his family, and the other forbade the slaughter of horned cattle.' But apart from these characteristics, Madhoji possessed others which, as his biographer has well said, cause him to stand on a pedestal high above all other Asiatic public men of his time. The fact that he was served with fidelity and affection by his subordinates, and that he was admired for his many excellent qualities of head and heart by so many men of diverse races and opinions, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Mahrattas, and Muhammadans, points to a universal recognition of this superiority. Not only did this superiority show itself in his capacity for rule, but in his high moral character. It has been said of a modern Indian Ruler: 'He is pre-eminently a man to be trusted.' The same may be said

of Madhoji, and no greater praise can a man wish for. This sketch may well conclude with this eulogy of his biographer: 'Alike by what he did, and what he refrained from doing, by his conquests in war, and by his administration in peace, Madhava Rao Scindia proved himself a wise and useful ruler, and he was both a precursor and a factor in the establishment of a rule stronger and more beneficent than his own.'

CHAPTER VI

THE STRUGGLE WITH THE MUHAMMADAN POWERS OF THE SOUTH

Haidar Ali, 1717–1782, and Tipu Sultan, 1753–1799

In his *Brief History of the Indian Peoples*, Sir W. W. Hunter has said: 'Authentic history in southern India begins with the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar, or Narsingha, from 1118 to 1565 A.D. The capital can still be traced within the Madras district of Bellary, on the right bank of the Tunga-bhadra river—vast ruins of temples, fortifications, tanks and bridges haunted by hyenas and snakes. For at least three centuries, Vijayanagar ruled over the southern part of the Indian peninsula. Its Hindu Rajas waged war and made peace on equal terms with the Muhammadan States of the Deccan. These States, however, eventually combined against it, and, aided by a rebellion within Vijayanagar itself, overthrew it at Talikot in 1565. The battle of Talikot marks the final downfall of Vijayanagar as a great Hindu kingdom. But its local Hindu chiefs or Nayaks kept hold of their respective fiefs. From these Nayaks are descended the well-known Palegars of the Madras Presidency and the Maharajas of Mysore.' Some of these southern Hindu chieftains, however, were not indigenous to the country where they had established themselves, and were practically foreigners. Such was the case with the founders of the dynasty, known as the Woodiars, or princes, the ancestors of the Maharajas of Mysore. They had originally come south from Kathiawar on the west of India, and having conquered some of the smaller States, gradually, as the Vijayanagar dynasty became weaker and weaker, absorbed them, and establishing their head quarters at Seringapatam, practically founded the kingdom of Mysore. The whole of their territories did

not comprise more than half of the present Mysore State. The most able of these early Mysore rulers was Chikka Raj, who appears to have been a brave soldier and a good administrator. He had been recognized by the Emperor Aurangzib, and had received from him the title of Jagat Diwan and an ivory throne. He died in 1704: his successors proved incompetent, and all power gradually passed into the hands of their ministers: a parallel to this may be seen in the history of the Mahrattas. After the year 1733, when the direct descent failed, all power passed into the hands of the commanders-in-chief, who elected the chiefs more or less at their will. Practically, therefore, the destinies of the State were controlled by the army: and it was under this condition of affairs that Haidar Ali was able to rise to prominence.

Haidar Ali was the son of a man who had availed himself of the opportunities that the times presented to a man fond of adventure and enterprise to raise himself from the position of a private soldier to that of commander of a band of mercenaries employed by the Muhammadan governor of a district known as Sira. His early experiences were bitter enough and calculated to leave a lasting impression on his character. The son of the man in whose service his father had been, having first extorted from his family by methods of torture all they possessed, cast them adrift to seek a refuge elsewhere. The family took up their residence at Bangalore: and Haidar Ali and his brother entered the service of the Mysore Raja's minister. Haidar Ali himself very soon attracted attention as a gallant and daring soldier, and as a keen sportsman, full of dash and energy. The times were such as were well calculated to bring any man possessing such qualities rapidly to the front. The Mysorean troops, in which Haidar Ali soon held an important command, were engaged in the wars that arose in connexion with the disputed successions among the reigning families, both at Haidarabad and at Arcot, and that followed on the death of the able and powerful Nizam-ul-Mulk of Haidarabad, in 1748. Having for some time taken the side of the princes whose cause had been espoused by the English, the Mysore minister went over to the French party. This brought Haidar Ali

for the first time into collision with the English: his first encounter did not give him a very high opinion of their strategy, as he succeeded in capturing a convoy and several guns. This early success of his doubtless influenced his later policy, when he himself as ruler of Mysore took up an attitude of hostility against the English. Having a more or less independent command, Haidar Ali was not slow to avail himself of his position to increase his own influence. He rapidly increased the number of the troops under his command, a matter of no great difficulty at a period when, as Sir Alfred Lyall has shown, a man had only to prove himself a famous and fortunate leader to attract to his standard any number of the mercenary bands that were loose about the country. In order to gain also that wealth that was essential to the progress of his schemes of aggrandizement he took into his service an astute Mahratta Brahman, one Khande Rao by name, who became his confidential adviser and accountant. His appointment as Governor of Dindigul gave him an excellent opportunity to add to his wealth, and he succeeded in accumulating a considerable amount by plundering the petty chiefs in the neighbourhood. He seems to have been ever an admirer of the French, and he employed several French artificers in the arsenal which he established at Dindigul.

The difficulties which the Mysore State soon experienced from the aggression of its stronger neighbours proved Haidar Ali's greatest opportunity, and out of these difficulties he emerged practically master of affairs, but not till he had experienced a crisis that nearly put an end to his career for ever, and which was brought about by the double-dealing of his secretary, the wily Mahratta Brahman, Khande Rao. The Nizam of Haidarabad had heavy arrears of tribute to collect from Mysore: he was the first to arrive with his French ally, the famous M. de Bussy: and he only departed again after the temples had been despoiled and the palace ransacked for the Crown jewels to pay his demands. He had been only just bought off when a far more formidable enemy appeared in the person of Balaji Baji Rao, the Mahratta Peshwa. He also demanded a heavy contribution: and his demand was met by the assignment of certain districts as security for future

payment. As, owing to the advice of Haidar Ali, who had been hastily summoned to the palace, the revenue of these districts was not paid to them, the Mahrattas returned and annexed them. Haidar Ali in this emergency was appointed commander-in-chief of the Mysore army, and succeeded in securing the restitution of the districts by the Mahrattas, the only condition the Mahrattas attached to the agreement he made with them being the payment of a large sum of money. Half this amount was raised by a forced contribution: the Mahratta bankers accepted Haidar's personal security for the other half. The Mysore government entrusted to him the collection of the revenues of the districts, and on his return to the capital, after the Mahrattas had withdrawn from Mysore territory, he was invested by the grateful Raja with the title of Fateh Haidar Bahadur in place of his older title, which was simply Haidar Nayak. This still further increased his importance, and with the new powers given him of collecting revenue he was on the way to becoming the first man in the State. It was at this period of his career that intrigues began to be set on foot in the palace. The old saying, 'Cherchez la femme,' is as true in the East as it is in the West. The Rani had long looked with resentment at the ascendancy which the Mysore minister had succeeded in gaining over the young Raja, and she obtained Haidar Ali's assistance to get him removed from power. Haidar Ali accomplished this with the assistance of his secretary. The result was not altogether what the Rani had expected: she had only exchanged one master for another, and that other soon proved himself a hard taskmaster: and the young Raja was kept by him in a state of subserviency and thraldom far more severe than before. This changed the attitude of the Rani towards Haidar: and she won over to her side his secretary and man of affairs, Khande Rao. The Mahrattas were taken into counsel by these two: and Haidar Ali only just escaped capture by riding for his life to Bangalore. It was a famous ride, ninety-eight miles in twenty hours, but Haidar had lost all his treasure, and artillery: and his troops were on the point of annihilation at the hands of the Mahrattas when they were suddenly recalled to Puna, where news had reached the Peshwa of

the disastrous battle of Panipat. Haidar Ali and Khande Rao met in the open field, with the result that victory lay with the latter: Haidar Ali now had recourse to some of those stratagems for which his name is famous: by one he obtained from the Mysore minister, who still held nominal rank, the command of a body of troops, and the title of commander-in-chief, by another he brought about Khande Rao's flight from the field to the capital, and marching with one of his rapid movements on that place he easily defeated the Raja's forces, with the result that they promptly acknowledged his authority. He again got control of affairs, and soon turned his attention to increasing his influence by further conquests. His treatment of his quondam secretary, who had behaved so treacherously, was, if ruthless, marked by a certain amount of humour. The story goes that the ladies of the palace interceded for the Mahratta Brahman, and that Haidar Ali promised that he would cherish him as a tota, or parrot: this promise he literally kept by keeping the unfortunate man in an iron cage, and feeding him on rice and milk to the end of his days.

Haidar Ali was now rapidly becoming the arbiter of the fortunes of Mysore, and ruler of the State. Its limits were too narrow for his ambition and he now entered on that career of conquest which was to result in its enlargement far beyond the ancient confines. Especially he now began to dream of an empire that should be bounded only by the sea on three of its sides at least, east, and west, and south, while to the north he doubtless looked forward to absorbing the territories of the Nizam, and thus reaching the confines of the Mahratta dominions. He realized the obstacles that lay in his path, and he knew that before he could achieve the dominion he craved, he would have to drive back into the sea from which they had come the island invaders. Meanwhile the conquest and incorporation within the dominions of the Mysore State of the territories of his nearer neighbours was his first concern: and he set about that with his characteristic energy and thoroughness, not to mention unscrupulousness and ruthlessness: and those whom he thus conquered were destined to realize the full meaning of the motto which he had made his own, 'Vae victis'. What he

could not gain by force, he gained by stratagem : and the old fable of 'King Stork and the Frogs' was more than once illustrated in his methods of territorial aggrandizement, as it was in those of the great Sikh Maharaja, Ranjit Singh. He first gave his support to a pretender to the throne of Haidarabad and received from him the Nawabship of Sira, which he had helped to recover from the Mahrattas, and a title which the pretender had no authority to bestow, but which Haidar Ali was glad to get because of the increased consequence it gave him, that of Haidar Ali Khan Bahadur. Haidar Ali first turned his attention to extending the borders of the kingdom to the north-west and the south-west, before attempting any aggression on the British possessions, which lay chiefly to the east and south-east of Mysore. His first most important conquest was that of Bednur, 'The town of bamboos.' The ruling family had been in possession for more than two hundred years ; the founders of the family were two brothers who had received the grant as a fief from the Raja of Vijayanagar a short time only before that kingdom was broken up : and they held a position regarded as of even greater importance than the rulers of Mysore. Its acquisition therefore by Haidar Ali added immensely to his prestige : and it proved the foundation of his future fortunes : the wealth alone that he thus acquired has been reckoned at twelve millions sterling. He owed it to the treachery of a fallen official that he so easily gained possession of this important fortress. While his army was making a feint attack, Haidar passed through the outworks by a secret path that he had been made aware of by this man. His next conquest was perhaps still more important as it gave him that seaboard which he was so anxious to have : this was the conquest of Malabar, which he claimed on the ground that it was a principality of Bednur. Sir W. W. Hunter has stated that the three most ancient kingdoms of southern India, according to tradition, were known as Chera, Chola, and Pandya : each of which could be traced back by pious genealogists for many centuries, and one for over two thousand years. The Chera dynasty alone could count fifty kings in uninterrupted succession. Malabar, tradition had it, had at one time been ruled by

a viceroy of the kings of the Chera dynasty, who, having become a Muhammadan, and having resolved to go on pilgrimage to Mecca, divided up his principality before his departure between four of his principal chiefs. One of these was styled Zamorin ; to him he bequeathed his sword, and as much land as the crowing of a cock could be heard over ; this land became known as Calicut, famous at a later date as the scene of the historic interview between the Portuguese explorer, Vasco da Gama, and the then Zamorin, which has been immortalized in the 'Lusiad' of the Portuguese poet, Camoens. The population of Malabar are known as Nairs: they offered a strenuous resistance, and it required practically two campaigns before Haidar could finally subdue the country. Haidar's special objective had been Calicut: the Zamorin, when he saw the treatment meted out by Haidar to his minister, shut himself up in his palace, set fire to it and perished in the flames. Haidar, who never did things by halves, put all his prisoners to death, and proceeded to deport the inhabitants wholesale to the plains of Mysore, where many thousands perished from starvation and misery.

Haidar Ali now felt himself strong enough to stand forth openly as the ruler of Mysore, and on the death of the Raja in 1766, he did so. He confiscated the estates of the Raja's nominal successor, plundered his palace, and assumed direct control of affairs. He allowed the Raja for his own purposes to retain the shadow of a name. This usurpation of the kingdom at once brought down the Mahrattas upon him. They formed a coalition against him with the Nizam, and advanced against Mysore. He tried all possible means to stay their progress, even to the extent of breaking down the embankments of the great reservoirs, which are one of the features of Mysore landscape, and so allowing all the main sources of water supply to be run off. He poisoned the wells, drove away the peasantry, and laid waste the whole countryside. But it was of no avail, and as he had done once before, so now again he had to buy them off. The Mahrattas were always Haidar's chief enemies, and he was destined to lose much of his treasure, and a goodly portion of his territory to them. Only towards the end of his career did they leave

him alone, when their attention was diverted from him to a still more formidable foe, whose progress was a still greater menace to their ascendancy than was that of Haidar, and at one time they even joined in a coalition with Haidar against the English. Notwithstanding this reverse, Haidar Ali now felt himself strong enough to try a throw with the English. Sir Alfred Lyall has described the position of affairs at the time that Haidar Ali came to this decision : 'A formal grant had recently been made by the Mogul emperor to the English of the districts north of Madras, known as the Five Sirkars, out of which the English had driven Bussy's garrisons in 1759, and which had been in English occupation ever since. The Nizam claimed suzerainty over these districts, and as he had never formally ceded them, he not unreasonably took offence at the transaction. However, being in straits for money, and in fear of Haidar Ali, the Nizam was soon pacified by a Treaty under which the Madras Government pledged themselves, rather vaguely, to support him in case of war. They also entered into a friendly arrangement with a marauding Mahratta chief, who had hired out 10,000 horsemen to the Nizam. Scarcely had the Treaty been signed, when Haidar Ali poured a large force into the Haidarabad territory, whereupon the Nizam, acting upon the agreement, at once demanded and obtained from Madras a contingent of troops. Meanwhile, the Mahratta chief plundered the Mysore districts on his own account until Haidar Ali bought him off, when he departed home with his booty to evade the Nizam's claim for a share in it. The Nizam next marched, attended by the Madras contingent, toward Mysore, but instead of fighting he came to a private understanding with Haidar Ali, according to which both turned upon the Company. Some sharp skirmishing followed, in which the Nizam was so roughly handled by the English that he was glad to make terms separately, and the war was pressed against Haidar Ali alone, who proved himself an antagonist much more adroit and active than the ordinary Indian princes of whom the Company had military experience.'

The first war between the English and Haidar Ali lasted from 1767 to 1769. It was badly managed by the Madras

Government, and if, as Sir Alfred Lyall has stated, the commanding officer was hampered by field deputies to superintend his movements, it is not surprising that Haidar Ali was able to gain many successes in the course of it, and eventually managed to bring it to a close by practically dictating his own terms from his camp at St. Thomas Mount, within five miles only of Madras, having in the interval succeeded in overrunning the country with his ubiquitous cavalry. This first campaign had more than one phase: in the first of these Haidar Ali found his match in that famous British officer, Colonel Joseph Smith. It is recorded that Smith's name became one to conjure with, almost as much so as the name of Clive had been, and an anecdote is told that serves to illustrate this: During one engagement with the troops of Haidar Ali, a British officer, finding himself hard pressed, gave the order to his men to call out the name of Smith. The ruse was successful, and the Mysore troops, imagining that the colonel was coming up in support, ceased for a time pressing the attack, and thus enabled the officer to strengthen his position sufficiently to ward off the next attack. During this first phase Colonel Smith was victorious in every engagement, and Haidar Ali on one occasion barely escaped with his life, his horse being shot under him. He was continually pressed, and the British forces carried the war into his own country. Haidar Ali at last, fearing for Bangalore, made overtures for peace, offering to cede territory and to pay a considerable sum of money. These overtures of his were rejected by the Madras Government. Meanwhile, Colonel Smith had been superseded in his command, as the Madras Government, blind to the real brilliance of his strategy, were disappointed at his having been unable to bring his active and ubiquitous enemy to the final arbitrament of a pitched battle in the open field. With the supersession of the one man who possessed that intuitive prescience which is ever the distinguishing mark of the born commander, and which, as was said of the Great Duke, 'enabled him to know what was happening on the other side of the hill,' and thus to locate at any particular moment an enemy who was here, there, and everywhere, the campaign took a turn that was distinctly unfavourable to the British: disaster followed

disaster, till the British themselves made overtures for peace. The negotiations, however, fell through owing to the Madras Government having honourably refused to sacrifice the interests of their ally, the Nawab of Arcot, whom Haidar Ali hated and despised, though that ally was playing fast and loose with them at the time. The only reply Haidar Ali vouchsafed to the British envoy who had come to negotiate terms of peace was: 'I am coming to the gates of Madras, and I will there listen to the propositions the Governor and Council may have to make.' And he kept his word. Sending off the main body of his army in a westerly direction he proceeded by forced marches to cover the distance of 130 miles, that separated him from Madras. This celebrated march took him three days and a half to accomplish, and he eventually arrived with a compact force of six thousand cavalry, and a few infantry. A convention was then agreed to by the British, one of the terms of which was the restoration of all places taken by either side during the war, and of all prisoners. A satiric French writer has thus written in connexion with this convention: 'By the direction of Haidar a derisive caricature was affixed to the gates of Fort St. George, in which the Governor and Council were represented as on their knees before Haidar, who held one of the Members of Council by the nose, drawn in the shape of an elephant's trunk, which poured forth guineas and pagodas. Colonel Smith was shown holding the Treaty in his hand, and breaking his sword in two.' If this satire served no other purpose, it, at any rate, showed the estimation in which Haidar Ali held the one British commander who had proved his equal in tactics and strategy. Sir Alfred Lyall has said of the convention: 'If the beginning of the war was a political blunder, another and worse one was made in ending it. The Treaty described all the contracting parties, of whom the principal were the English, Haidar Ali, and the Mahrattas, as reciprocally friends and allies of each other, provided that they did not become aggressors against one another, so that each incurred a loose and vaguely-worded obligation of assisting the other in the event of future hostilities.' This loose wording was not without its results on the future relations between Haidar

Ali and the English; and its evasion by the British under circumstances that largely absolved them from any intentional breach of faith, when, in accordance with its provisions, Haidar called upon them to assist him at a time when he became hard pressed by the Mahrattas, resulted in Haidar Ali becoming thenceforward 'a vindictive enemy watching for an occasion, which he soon found, of gratifying his resentment'.

After a prolonged struggle with the Mahrattas, out of which he emerged with loss, both of treasure and of territory, Haidar Ali proceeded to recoup himself in his usual way by fresh conquests, in order that he might strengthen his position before bringing the matter to that final issue with the British, which he henceforth ever kept in view, and for which he prepared by stirring up trouble for them, as he well knew how to do, in various parts of India. In the interval he had had the nominal ruler of Mysore ruthlessly strangled, having suspected him of complicity with the Mahrattas, and he had set up another puppet sovereign in his place. His first conquest was Coorg; he had already made one attempt to reduce it after his successful capture of Bednur. A disputed succession now gave him the opportunity he wanted, and he gained possession of the capital of this small hill principality, Merkara, without much difficulty. From the vantage ground he had thus secured he soon made himself master of the whole of the Malabar coast. This, again, was not without significance in its bearing upon his future relations with the British, for upon this coast was a French possession, Mahé, a seaport over which he claimed protection, and the seizure of which by the British at a later period when they were taking possession of all the French settlements in India, impelled thereto by the alarm of war with France, caused him so much umbrage that it precipitated that war with the British which he had been so long contemplating. However, the time had not yet arrived, and he continued his career of self-aggrandizement. In the disputed succession at Puna he saw an opportunity not to be neglected, and he offered the pretender, Raghoba, his assistance if he would get the tribute payable by Mysore to Puna considerably reduced. These negotiations came to nothing, as Raghoba

never succeeded in establishing himself as Peshwa. During this interval Haidar ruthlessly suppressed an insurrection in Coorg. Another opportunity for adding to his territories now presented itself by the necessity the Palegar, or chief, of Bellary, a fortress lying to the north-east of Mysore, was under of calling in his assistance against a force sent against it by the Nizam, under the command of the celebrated Frenchman, M. de Lally. Haidar Ali surprised this force, and having thus raised the siege, proceeded to take over the place for himself. To the east of Bellary there was a fort which was in the occupation of the famous Mahratta partisan leader, Morari Rao ; failure of the water supply caused Morari Rao's surrender. Haidar Ali had a short way of disposing of his political prisoners. He sent them to a rock-fortress which had an unenviable reputation for an unwholesome water supply : none of his prisoners lived long after being sent there, and Morari Rao was no exception. A recent imperial edict of the Chinese government, threatening to send certain offenders against the law to 'a pestilential frontier of the empire', shows that modern Oriental despots know how to get rid of obnoxious individuals equally well. Some of Haidar Ali's methods of conquest may be illustrated from the stratagem he adopted to get possession of Dharwar ; it reads almost like an episode in the Trojan war. He first had a fictitious letter sent to the commandant of the fort, telling him that he might expect aid from the Mahrattas, in whose territory the fort lay. He then dressed up a body of his troops as Mahrattas, and ordered another body to fire upon them with blank cartridges. This sham fight went on till the gates of the fort were reached. The force thought by the garrison to be Mahrattas were admitted ; once inside, the rest was easy, and the fort was Haidar's. Having succeeded in gaining the fort of Chitaldrug, against whose chieftain he had an old score, through the connivence of the chief's own Muhammadan contingent, he carried off to his capital some 20,000 of the inhabitants ; among these were large numbers of young boys, whom he trained to arms. They formed the nucleus of a body of compulsory converts from Hinduism to Islam. Tipu Sultan afterwards largely augmented their numbers. They were styled the chela

or disciple battalions, and the story goes that the famous Danish missionary, Schwartz, when visiting Seringapatam on one occasion, was gravely informed that the boys were destitute orphans whom Haidar had kindly taken under his protection. Haidar's last conquest was that of Cuddapa. This fort belonged to an Afghan chief, one more illustration, out of many, of the state of India at this period of its history, when soldiers of fortune were busy carving out principalities for themselves. Haidar nearly lost his life from over-confidence in Afghan faith: he had taken into his service all the Afghans who could obtain security for their allegiance; eighty of the troopers had lost their horses and could not find securities. Haidar had allowed them to retain their weapons. One night they rose, killed their guard, and penetrated to Haidar's tent. Hearing the tumult, he made up a dummy figure and placed it in his bed, and cutting a hole in the tent just succeeded in escaping. The men were captured and merciless treatment was meted out to them. Haidar Ali made a matrimonial alliance with the family of the Nawab of Cuddapa and married his sister, who is recorded to have been a very beautiful woman.

Sir Alfred Lyall has well described the state of affairs that led to the final trial of strength between the English and Haidar Ali; he has said: 'Throughout all this period—that is during the last quarter of the eighteenth century the balance of power in India rested upon a kind of triangular equipoise between the English, the Mahrattas, and Mysore. If two of these powers quarrelled, the third became predominant for the time; if two of them united, the third was in jeopardy. This is what had happened in 1778, when the alarm of war with France drove the Anglo-Indian Government into precipitate measures that embroiled us first with the Mahrattas and secondly with Mysore, and consequently brought down upon us the combined hostility of both.' Not the Mahrattas and the Mysore ruler alone had their grievances against the English at this time, but the Nizam also had his; a formidable combination was soon formed at the instance of the Puna Darbar, and a triple alliance effected with the express object of the expulsion of the English from southern India. As already

stated, Haidar had his special grievance in the seizure by the English of the French seaport of Mahé. Haidar Ali had his own special reasons for keeping this port open: apart from the value he attached to a seaboard under his own control, Haidar Ali was particularly desirous that this particular port which, though it belonged to his friends, the French, he claimed to lie within his jurisdiction as the suzerain of these parts, should not be interfered with; it was his chief means of communication with England's enemies in the west, through the portals of which he was in the habit of receiving reinforcements and military stores. Sir Alfred Lyall has said, 'Haidar Ali had long perceived that the weakness of India and the strength of England lay in the defenceless condition of the Indian seaboard. He had himself made strenuous exertions to organize a naval armament.' When, therefore, the English took Mahé in 1779, and, in addition, calmly marched a force across his territory to occupy a certain district under their jurisdiction which was threatened by the Nizam, he decided that the time was ripe for an attack upon the British possessions in the south. All premonitory signs of coming danger had, says Sir Alfred Lyall, been treated at Madras with inattention and contempt: 'The departing Governor had recorded in a farewell minute his satisfaction at leaving the southern Presidency in perfect tranquillity; yet a few months later Haidar Ali, whose preparations had long been notorious, burst upon the low country like a thunderstorm, and his cavalry ravaged the Karnatik up to the suburbs of Madras.'

The war which had thus commenced in the middle of 1780 was to be protracted till 1784; but Haidar Ali was not destined to see it through. One of the greatest disasters that have ever befallen British arms in India took place during the earlier phase of the war. This was the cutting up of a British force under Colonel Baillie, after one of the most gallant defences ever recorded in the annals of the English in India. The force had successfully repulsed an attack made by Tipu, when its further progress was delayed by the sudden rising of a river, on the banks of which it had to bivouac; this gave time for the enemy to renew the attack, and for Haidar to bring up his whole army against it. The resistance offered was so gallant

that Haidar was on the point of retiring in despair of overcoming it, when he was dissuaded from doing so by his French ally, M. de Lally. The English ammunition then ran short, and Haidar pressed the attack. Colonel Baillie retired to an eminence and formed his troops into a square, that formation of British troops that has so often wrested victory out of apparent defeat, and repulsed the determined attacks of the enemy no less than thirteen times, till a panic seized his sepoys and he was compelled to ask for quarter: his flag of truce was disregarded, and it was only due to the intercession of the gallant French officers with Haidar that his force was not totally annihilated. Two thousand English troops became prisoners of war; and among them David Baird, who afterwards as Sir David Baird made himself famous at the final capture of Seringapatam which caused the death of Tipu, and brought about the end of the long struggle for supremacy between the English and the Mysore usurpers. The remark recorded to have been made by Baird's mother when she heard that the prisoners were chained together was: 'I pity the mon who is chained to our Davie.' Haidar is said to have sat in state after the battle to distribute rewards for the production of prisoners, and he is also said to have commemorated his victory by a painting on the walls of one of his favourite garden houses, in a way that was not uncommon with him, as there was ever a grain of satiric humour in his composition. But Haidar Ali had no longer the Madras Government alone to deal with. There was a man now at the helm of State whose measure he had not taken. Warren Hastings was not a man to brook aggression on any of the outlying possessions of the British in India, and having by his statesmanship succeeded in detaching the Mahrattas and the Nizam from the coalition, he poured reinforcements into the Madras province, and what was still more important, sent a man to take supreme command who, though he was not so young as he had been, soon changed the aspect of affairs. Sir Eyre Coote succeeded in effectively crippling Haidar Ali at the battle of Porto Novo, and again at Arni. Operations had then to be suspended temporarily owing to the rainy season having commenced; before they could be resumed, Haidar Ali

had passed away; he had long suffered from cancer in the back, and he died in camp some sixteen miles to the north of Arcot, early in December, 1782. Before his death Haidar Ali is said to have realized the real hopelessness of the struggle he had entered on with the British, and he is reported to have said to his finance minister one day: 'I have committed a great error: I have purchased a draught of sendhi (an intoxicating drink), at the price of a lakh of pagodas. Between me and the English there were grounds for mutual dissatisfaction, but no sufficient cause for war. The defeat of many Baillies and Braithwaites will not destroy them. I can ruin their resources by land, but I cannot dry up the sea.' It is said that after his death a message was found in the folds of his turban for his son Tipu, counselling him to come to terms with the English before it was too late.

It is not without significance that one of Haidar's cognomens should have been 'The Lion', and one of Tipu's 'The Tiger'. The facts of natural history fail to bear out the common belief that the lion among animals has more nobility in its nature than the tiger: not even the most cunning of the man-eating tigers, which it is often one of the many beneficent functions of the Englishman in India to clear the countryside of, could approach the famous lions of Tsavo in cunning ferocity. Though this may be so, and though the lion may not be the superior of the tiger in nature, the male lion with its magnificent head certainly presents a nobler appearance than does the tiger with its long lithe body; and after all, a noble appearance goes for something. Taking the traditional view of the lion, there was an aptness in Haidar's appellation as there was in Tipu's: both may have been and were ruthless in their methods, but there was an element of nobility in the character of Haidar that was entirely wanting in that of his son: and one reason for this perhaps lies in the fact that Haidar possessed the saving grace of humour. An illustration of this quality combined with that shrewdness that was also one of his marked characteristics may be given here: it became necessary for him at one period of his career to select a successor to the Mysore Raj to set up as a puppet sovereign. The story

goes that he collected together all the youthful scions of the house, and then throwing a variety of playthings and ornaments before them, watched the result. One of the children, attracted by the glitter of a jewelled dagger, seized it in one hand, and with the other grasped a lime, whereupon Haidar facetiously remarked, 'Ah! there is a real Raja,' and promptly ordered him to be installed. Haidar himself was a shrewd man of business, though he could neither read nor write: few of the chiefs of his time indeed could do so. In lieu of a signature they would adopt some fanciful device or seal to affix to papers requiring it. To this day, indeed, many of the chiefs of what are known as the tributary *Mahals* of Orissa, use a similar form of attestation. One will be found using the device of a peacock, another a tiger's claw, a third a conch shell, another a flower. The modern crests of many of the Indian chiefs are relics of the old devices used by their ancestors, and the writer has received more than one letter with such devices as those mentioned, adopted with an appropriate motto as the family crest. Haidar's methods of revenue collection were simple enough: he appointed a minister of finance, and his instructions to him were 'Get money, never mind how, but get money'. A correspondent of *The Times* has given a humorous account of his recent journey through Persia. At one place he came to, he relates how he found Persian soldiers who professed to be guarding the village, but who had really deserted from Tabriz: their officer had telephoned to Tabriz for instructions, stating that his men demanded pay. The answer he received was: 'Are there not enough travellers on the road to satisfy the demands of the small number of men you have with you?' The correspondent humorously adds that when he heard of this ominous episode, he proceeded on his way without his baggage. This story serves to illustrate one of Haidar Ali's methods. He paid his troops only ten months' pay instead of twelve, and the mounted troops were paid for twenty days of the month only, being expected to recoup themselves by plunder. But Haidar's methods were more business-like than those of the Persian officials mentioned: he kept a very careful tally of all such plunder, and the troops

were only allowed to retain a share after Haidar had had a valuation made. That his general methods, however, did not strike the people as anything out of the common, and that they regarded them as only ordinary incidents in a day's work cannot be better illustrated than by a story which was related to the writer many years ago by a relative who had been at one time a civilian officer in a high position in southern India; he had made a name for himself amongst the people of the countryside for his walks and talks with them, as he afterwards did in Africa, where his name became a household word amongst the native chiefs for his prowess in sport and geniality. Such men will ever hear the ungarnished truth, instead of being told only what the people they converse with think they want to hear. He was one day conversing with one of the many representatives of the old baronial families of that part of India on the subject of the respective merits of the old and new régime. The old chief was asked by him which he preferred. He pointed in the direction of an old fort and said, 'Sahib, the answer to your question lies there. I can remember the time when the revenue officials came down on us with their troops, and if we had not the wherewithal to pay all their demands, we would retire with our household gods behind the walls of our ancestral fort, and remain there till they had got what they wanted off our fields, or retired to see if they could meet with better success elsewhere. We then left the shelter of the fort, and returned to our homes: we may have found our homesteads burnt, but our lands remained to us, and we knew we were free from disturbance for at least a year or two. Now, if we are in arrears, an individual comes armed by the law with a piece of paper, and if we cannot pay we have no longer the friendly shelter of the ancestral fort to retire to, where we can defy the law. Our homesteads, it is true, will no longer be burnt; they may be left to us, but our ancestral lands will be given to a stranger. Need you ask, Sahib, which we prefer?' From such stories as these Sir Alfred Lyall doubtless drew his inspiration for his charming collection of *Verses written in India*. It is only fair to the Government of India to add that this conversation took place long before the

beneficent legislation of recent years that has for its special object the prevention, as much as possible, of the alienation of the lands, not alone of the old territorial aristocracy, but of peasant proprietors. Haidar's methods for keeping his officials up to the mark were rough and ready enough: all neglect of duty was punished by the scourge, and it is recorded that his korba, or long-lashed whip, was in daily request, and few of his officials seem to have escaped its infliction. In the case of his own son he certainly showed his faith in the good old saying, 'Spare the rod and spoil the child': he more than once made Tipu, even after he had long passed childhood, feel its sting. Yet he succeeded in securing the attachment of many of his agents, and he never failed in rewarding good service liberally, a sure way in the East to secure such service.

In person Haidar Ali was a man of medium height with rather coarse features, and a smooth face unlike the great majority of Orientals, and especially unlike the average Muhammadan. He always wore a brilliant scarlet turban, flat at the top and of immense length. His uniform was white satin, with boots of yellow velvet, and a scarf of white silk around his waist. Just such a figure has the writer seen when some of the baronial chiefs from the wilds of the southern provinces come in all their barbaric splendour to head quarters for great ceremonial occasions, magnificently arrayed themselves, and mounted on magnificently caparisoned State elephants with bells jangling, and trumpets preceding. Such were the progresses of Haidar Ali: indeed, on State occasions it is said his processions could only be surpassed by those of the Great Mogul at the height of his power. He was a versatile genius in his way; it is recorded of him that 'he could hear a letter read, dictate his orders, and witness a theatrical exhibition all at once', without being distracted by any one of these occupations. His biographer has said of him, 'In many respects he was a man who rose superior to his times, especially in his singular faithfulness to his engagements, and in the straightforwardness of the policy he pursued towards the English. He was the most formidable rival the English had to contend against, and he had the sagacity to recognize in them his most formidable

opponents. His keenness to possess a navy showed that he realized that sea power was the secret of the strength of the British, and that the possession of supremacy at sea was the key to the possession of empire on land. Though he failed in one part of his ambition, namely, the foundation of a great southern empire, a failure largely due to the superior statecraft of the great Englishman, who at that time controlled the destinies of England in the East, he succeeded in one essential part of that ambition, namely, in making himself supreme ruler of Mysore, and in leaving behind him in the memory of the people a great name, always mentioned with respect and with admiration for his prowess, and the success with which he had made himself sovereign of Mysore.'

The ministers had been careful to keep the news of the death of Haidar from the army, and his palanquin was carried with the army on its march westward, as if he was still with it. Meanwhile, they had sent off express messengers to Tipu to inform him of the event. Tipu's arrival in camp, and his taking over the supreme command was the first intimation the army received that Haidar Ali was dead. Owing to the irresolution of the Madras Government at this supreme crisis, combined with the difficulty of finding a successor at the moment to the veteran general, Sir Eyre Coote, whom ill health had compelled to resign his command, any opportunity that the British had had of bringing matters to a final issue passed away for the time, and the war continued. British forces sent by the Bombay Government were now operating in the regions to the west of Mysore. Mangalore had been captured, and Bednur had been surrendered by Tipu's commandant, out of chagrin for his treatment by Tipu, which was so contrary to the trust that his father had always reposed in him. He retired from the fort, taking with him all its immense treasure, and left it for the British to occupy. Tipu's first object was to recover his authority in Malabar by the recapture of these two places : this he eventually succeeded in effecting. General Matthews was in command of the British forces operating in Malabar, and he found himself compelled to surrender Bednur to Tipu, who had promised him and his troops a safe con-

duct to the coast. When Tipu found the treasury empty, he was so infuriated that he placed the general and many of his officers and men in irons, and sent them off into durance vile to his capital, Seringapatam, where the general soon succumbed to the cruel and inhuman treatment he received. There are two accounts as to how his death came about; one states that he was compelled to eat poisoned food, the only alternative of a slow death by starvation; the other that he was beaten to death by his guards with the butt ends of their muskets. Anyhow, his treatment showed the British the kind of enemy they now had to deal with, and the complete extermination of such a monster of cruelty as he was to show himself to all who fell into his hands, whether they were Indians or Europeans, became only a question of time. It is only fair to him to say that it is generally agreed that there was a strain of insanity in his composition; this was exemplified by a remark he is credited with once making, that he would rather live two days as a tiger than two hundred years as a sheep. He adopted a tiger as his device, and hencc derived his cognomen, to which reference has already been made. He also kept a cage of live tigers in front of his palace. In this, however, he was not singular, other Oriental rulers have done the same. On a visit that the writer paid to Rajputana some years ago, he saw such a cage at the head of the broad street that led to the palace; history does not record that they were ever let loose in times of an emeute, but doubtless they would have proved a valuable auxiliary in clearing the streets in such an emergency. Tipu's attack on Mangalore, the English commandant of which fort had eventually to surrender, having no other alternative than the slow starvation of his force, was characterized by one of those acts of honourable courtesy on the part of his French allies that ever characterized these gallant rivals of the English during these early struggles in India, and to which reference has been made in the third volume of this series of sketches. Tipu had arranged for an assault, for the successful issue of which he relied on the French engineer officers with his force; almost on the eve of the assault, news reached the camp that peace had been concluded in Europe between France

and England; and the French officers promptly withdrew their assistance. The Peace of Versailles had brought the Seven Years' War to an end. It is recorded that that gallant French admiral, the Bailli de Suffren, when he heard the news, exclaimed, 'God be praised for the Peace! for it was clear that in India, though we had the means to impose the law, all would have been lost.' A British force under Colonel Fullarton had been marching to the relief of Mangalore, when news reached the colonel that the Madras Government had opened negotiations with Tipu for the conclusion of peace. He was the more disappointed as he had been hoping to take advantage of rumoured disaffection in Tipu's army, in order to attack him with considerable chances of success. The negotiations were protracted, the Madras envoy being meanwhile subjected to much humiliation by Tipu, but they finally resulted in the signing of the Treaty of Mangalore, in 1784, under the terms of which both parties agreed mutually to restore all places seized during the war, and to surrender all prisoners. Many thousands of Tipu's prisoners had succumbed to their vile treatment, and he did not carry out in its entirety the terms regarding the surrender of the survivors, still keeping some in his hands as hostages, in view of future eventualities. Both he and the English recognized that no lasting peace was possible, and that it was only a hollow truce that had been effected; and within less than six years a renewal of the struggle had begun.

Tipu soon began making his preparations. Neither did the English neglect theirs. Lord Cornwallis had now succeeded to the reins of the supreme government with fuller authority than his great predecessor had enjoyed, and with a determination to exercise that authority. It was no longer to be left to provincial governments to decide whether there should be war or not. Nor were they any longer to be allowed to prosecute such wars in their own irresponsible manner. The affairs of British India were henceforth to be conducted from an imperial point of view. Cornwallis at once set about bringing his army up to a war footing in preparation for the struggle. Tipu had meanwhile been seeking alliances among European nations,

but his envoys to foreign courts had had to content themselves with ostentatious receptions, and what Sir Alfred Lyall has styled, unsubstantial diplomatic amenities. Similarly his negotiations with the Afghan king, Zaman Shah, and the Mahrattas, had resulted in nothing definite. Like his father Haidar before him, Tipu had had dreams of naval power; indeed, he is recorded to have formed a Navy Department: amongst the allowances he was prepared to grant his sea-captains was horse allowance. It is not added that he had ever heard of horse marines. He fully recognized the value of a seaboard, and not content with his practical command of the Malabar coast, he coveted the possession of the important province of Travancore, which had also been a kind of 'Naboth's Vineyard' to his father. Its chief was in alliance with the British. Towards the end of 1789 Tipu made his first attempt on the integrity of that State. This proved disastrous; he is said to have lost his shield and his sword in this attack, and they were taken in triumph to the capital of Travancore. On hearing of this unprovoked attack, Lord Cornwallis at once sent orders to Madras that 'a faithful ally was not to be overwhelmed by an insolent and cruel enemy'. Tipu sent an insincere apology, alleging that his troops had only been searching for fugitives, and had accidentally come into collision with the army of Travancore. However, he renewed the attack, and Cornwallis promptly declared war, having first taken the precaution to effect a defensive and offensive alliance with the Mahrattas and the Nizam. The astute Brahman, who controlled affairs at Puna, Nana Farnavis, was not over anxious at any time to ally himself with the British, and he only did so on this occasion in order to put a spoke in the wheel of the great Mahratta chieftain, Madhava Rao Scindia, who, he thought, was running things too much 'on his own', as the saying is, and who had himself offered his alliance, though Lord Cornwallis had politely declined the offer. Though the alliance did not materially affect the final issue, both the allies were able to be of material assistance in keeping some of Tipu's forces engaged in the north, while Cornwallis's armies were operating more to the south of his territories. The campaign lasted

rather more than a year : during the earlier portion of it Tipu showed superior strategy to that displayed by General Medows, who had been first entrusted with the command of the British army. He effectually frustrated the British movements on more than one occasion by means of the excellence of his intelligence department, and by his own rapid marches. His cavalry, like his father's fine horse, were here, there, and everywhere. Upon Lord Cornwallis assuming personal command, the campaign took on another aspect altogether. He soon penetrated to the interior of Mysore, and his first great success was the capture of Bangalore. Tipu mistook one strategic movement that Cornwallis was compelled to make to the rear, in order to prevent his communications being cut, for a final retirement, and he is recorded to have fired a royal salute from his ramparts, and to have illuminated his capital in honour of the retirement. He was soon, however, to be undeceived. By February, 1792, Lord Cornwallis was encamped within six miles of his capital. Tipu soon found himself in a tight place, and he sent envoys to the British camp to arrange the terms of a convention. The terms were severe, but Tipu was at first disposed to agree to them, but hesitated long before he finally made up his mind to accept them, and only when he was definitely informed that the negotiations would be broken off, and the siege pressed by the British, whose forces were now in possession of the island in the immediate vicinity of the fort, did he finally decide that his best interests lay in signing the Treaty. This is known as the Treaty of Seringapatam. So far as the actual Treaty was concerned, Tipu faithfully discharged his obligations to the British Government, but the heavy burden he laid upon his cultivators, from whom he extorted three times the amount of the indemnity he was called upon to pay, greatly impoverished the country : even his own troops were not exempted from paying their share of the burden of taxation. Again he recognized that another struggle was inevitable, and he exerted every nerve to strengthen his capital, and to get allies in preparation for it.

In the Marquess Wellesley, who had now become Governor-General of India, Tipu found his match.

Amongst the alliances that Tipu had sought was one with the French Republic, and he had sent a secret mission across the Indian Ocean to the Isle of France to enlist the aid of the French governor in effecting such an alliance. 'When, therefore,' Sir Alfred Lyall has said, 'it became known that Tipu's embassy to the Isle of France had brought back not only an offensive and defensive alliance with the French, "for the express purpose of expelling the British nation from India," but also some French officers and recruits for the Mysore army, the Governor-General concluded that he had just grounds for hostile action.' A curious document is stated by the biographer of Tipu to have been found at a later period in the palace of Seringapatam, recording the proceedings of a body of Frenchmen at the capital who celebrated the recent establishment of the French Republic by holding a meeting, and greeting Tipu as 'Citizen Tipu', and planting in his presence the tree of liberty surmounted by the cap of equality. The Governor-General sent off dispatches to the Madras Government requesting all possible preparations to be made in case of war being rendered necessary. In the meantime he gave Tipu every opportunity of coming to a friendly arrangement with the British. A good illustration of Tipu's contemptuous attitude is recorded by his biographer. He had himself seen one of the Governor-General's letters to Tipu which had been preserved in the family of one of his chief officers: Tipu had simply endorsed it in Persian, 'Jawab na darad,' which translated means, 'There is no answer.' The war that ensued ended, as history has recorded, in the capture of Seringapatam, and in the death of Tipu. He died the death of a hero; the story has been thus told: 'Tipu had hastened to the breach through which General Baird and his storming party had entered, to try to rally his troops, but had to retreat before the British onset, deserted by his followers. He mounted his horse, and was making for the gateway, when his further progress was hampered by fugitives from among his own troops. He was then wounded in the breast by a British soldier; he pushed on, however, but then found himself confronted by a body of British troops. He was again wounded just as he approached the

gateway, and his horse fell under him. Some of his attendants raised him, and placed him in his palanquin under an arch in the gateway. They implored him to make himself known to the English troops, from whose commanders he would have received the attention due to his rank, but he resolutely refused to comply with the suggestion. Some European troops soon after entered the gateway, and one of them attempted to remove his richly-jewelled sword-belt, when, wounded as he was, he made a cut at him and wounded him in the knee. This so enraged the man that he levelled his musket at him and shot him in the head, causing instantaneous death.' When search was afterwards made for him, his body was found, being recognized by the talisman on his right arm. It was placed in his palanquin and conveyed by the general's orders to the palace for the night. Next day the body was placed in the tomb prepared for it in the mausoleum of Haidar Ali with, states his biographer, all the solemn honours befitting a sovereign, and in accordance with Oriental custom largesse was distributed to the poor after the ceremony. General Baird is recorded to have behaved with singular magnanimity towards the conquered inhabitants of the city. There was an entire absence of any vindictiveness for the sufferings he had himself endured when in prison there some years before. He allowed no bloodshed and no pillaging, and stationed guards over the houses of all the principal chiefs. The natural result of such generous conduct followed : the chiefs readily submitted to their conquerors. It is recorded that among the treasures of the palace was a valuable library which contained many curious and interesting manuscripts. One precious Quran was sent to Windsor Castle to be placed in the library of the King of England. The greater part of the library was transferred to the new college of Fort William, founded by the Marquess Wellesley. Some of the books are stated to have belonged to the kings of Bijapur and Golconda. Tipu's sons were sent to reside at Vellore, but after the mutiny that occurred there in 1807, they were sent to Calcutta. One of the younger sons, Prince Ghulam Mahomed only died in 1877, after an honourable career in that city as a Justice of the Peace. He was a man much respected for his generous

hospitality and charity. Tipu's principal officers all received handsome pensions, and they are said to have expressed their full appreciation of a generosity which was as welcome as it was unexpected. Sir W. W. Hunter has said : 'No event since the battle of Plassey so greatly impressed the natives of India as the capture of Seringapatam, which won for General Harris an eventual peerage, and for Wellesley an Irish marquessate.'

Perhaps the less said about the civil administration of Tipu Sultan the better. If his father had chastised his subjects, his son included, with whips, the son chastised them with scorpions. The department in which Tipu took the greatest interest, next to that dealing with ways and means, was the police department of his administration. A writer who signs himself 'Golden Horn' has written, in a recent number of *The Spectator*, a letter bearing on 'The situation at Constantinople', and he has said as follows:—'The Padishah could only work with slaves and flatterers. Gradually all personal liberty and independence disappeared. A great system of espionage was created, whereby each trifling event in the daily life of every person of consequence was reported to the palace. Spies pervaded the hotels, the tramcars, the restaurants, the landing-stages, and every place of public resort.' If this was the state of things under the régime of the Sultan of Turkey until the Young Turks appeared upon the scene, it was the same, if not indeed far worse, under the régime of Tipu, allowing, of course, for the change of circumstances. Tipu himself assumed the magniloquent title of Padishah; he never trusted any one; his system of espionage was most complete : it was practically the chief function, if not indeed the sole function, his police had to discharge. Spies were everywhere, and daily reports of what went on were sent in to him. Men were not allowed even to visit their neighbours to converse on any topic. With all his faults, Tipu Sultan had a zeal for Islam, which his co-religionists consider was their sufficient condonation, and on account of which they long held his memory in reverence in southern India. He is said on one occasion to have issued an edict entirely prohibiting the sale of intoxicating drinks throughout his dominions, allowing their use only to the French soldiers in his service,

On another occasion he issued a remarkable proclamation, in which he called upon all true believers 'to extract the cotton of negligence from the ears of their understanding, and to take shelter in his dominions, where their lives, their honour, and their property would remain under the protection of God.' To Englishmen the fact that he died the death of a hero will form his best Apologia. Sir Alfred Lyall has well said: 'It may be truly said that the stars in their courses fought against Tipu—a fierce, fanatic, and ignorant Muhammadan, who was nevertheless sufficiently endowed with some of the sterner qualities required for Asiatic rulership to have made for himself a name among the Indian princes of his time. But he had no political ability of the higher sort; still less had he any touch of that instinct which has occasionally warned the ablest and strongest Asiatic chiefs to avoid collision with Europeans. He was swept away by a flood that was overwhelming far greater States than Mysore, that had taken its rise in a distant part of the world, out of events beyond his comprehension, and totally beyond his control, and that was now running full in the channel which carried the English, by a natural determination of converging consequences, to supreme ascendancy in India.'

CHAPTER VII

THE SIKH BARRIER BETWEEN OUR GROWING EMPIRE AND CENTRAL ASIA

Ranjit Singh, 1780–1839

The author of that excellent manual, *British Dominion in India*, Sir Alfred Lyall, has thus written of the rise of the great Sikh people : ‘ Under this new Hindu federation, much more closely knit together by ties of race and common faith than the Mahrattas, the people became animated by a martial spirit and a fiery enthusiasm such as the Hindus had not hitherto displayed. The history of the Sikhs illustrates a phenomenon well known in Asia, where an insurrectionary movement is always particularly dangerous if it takes a religious complexion, and where fanaticism may endure and accumulate under a spiritual leader until it explodes in the world of politics with the force of dynamite. The martyrdom of their first prophet and their persecution by the later Mogul emperors had engendered in these hardy peasants a fierce hatred of Islam. They had been repressed and broken by the Afghan armies of Ahmad Shah, but as his grasp on the Punjab relaxed, their combination became closer and more vigorous, until by 1785 the Sikhs had mastered the whole country between the Jhilam and the Sutlej rivers in the centre of the Punjab, were threatening the Muhammadan princes about Delhi, and had made pillaging excursions eastward across the Ganges into Rohil-khand.’ For some time, and until the rise to power of Ranjit Singh, the Sikhs consisted of a number of confederacies, more or less loosely bound together, each ruled by its own chief. It was Ranjit Singh who united the great majority of them into one confederacy under himself as king. He was the founder of the Sikh kingdom. He rose to eminence, like so many other Oriental rulers, at an early age : he was only

twenty when he became Governor of Lahore. The history of the transformation of the Sikhs from a purely religious sect into a great military confederation will always be identified with the name of Ranjit Singh, who, if he did not originate the movement, at any rate brought about its consummation.

By origin the Sikhs were mainly those hardy cultivators of Central India who are known as Jats. Their two main divisions were the Manjha, and the Malwa Sikhs. The former occupied the middle territory lying between the Beas and the Ravi known generally as the Bari Doab, and centred chiefly round the two cities of Lahore and Amritsar. Their leaders rose to the position of great barons holding their lands by the sword. Their opportunity had come while the Mogul emperors were occupied with the Afghan invasions, and especially during that period of anarchy that set in after the great battle of Panipat in 1761. The ancestors of the Malwa Sikhs were also Hindu peasants of Jat or Rajput origin, who had emigrated from Jaisulmir in Rajputana about the middle of the sixteenth century. They had settled down as peaceful subjects of the Mogul emperors. Their chief men held the position of malguzars or collectors of revenue on behalf of the emperor, and they regularly paid revenue to the Moguls. They also had had their opportunity gradually to carve out principalities for themselves during the gradual break up of the Mogul empire from the early part of the eighteenth century onwards, and great houses gradually arose which extorted titles from the emperors of Delhi. The chief representative at this time of these Malwa Sikhs is the great house of Patiala. They never came under the rule of the Sikh Maharaja, though he often tried to absorb them; to avoid this they sought and obtained British protection, and have always been noted for their stanch loyalty to the connexion.

But what especially helped in transforming men from peaceful and industrious agriculturists and colonists into such hardy warriors as the Sikhs eventually became, was the persecution that they underwent, which started under the Emperor Aurangzib, but was especially violent under one of his successors, Farukhsiyar, early in the

eighteenth century. History has recorded how the great Sikh leader, Banda, the military successor of the tenth Guru, Govind Singh, was carried about the country by his Muhammadan captors in an iron cage, dressed in imperial purple robes with scarlet turban and cloth of gold, a spectacle to gods and men. But worse was to follow: his son was captured: his heart torn out before his father's eyes, and thrown into his face; and he was himself then torn to pieces with red-hot pincers, and his followers exterminated as if they were so many wild animals. No wonder that the old proverb, 'The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church,' was fully exemplified in the case of the Sikhs. From their persecution they rose stronger than ever. No wonder, too, that for years the Sikhs were distinguished for their undying hatred of Islam, a term which, though in its origin expressive of peace, more often in those times wore a militant aspect, being generally identified with war to the death against all unbelievers. The only alternatives that the militant Muhammadan ever offers are the sword or conversion.

The expression Sikh in its etymological origin means a disciple or learner; and this points to the fact that a creed and not a race or nationality is denoted by it. Herein there is a contrast between the Sikh and the Hindu proper: the difference may be thus expressed: a Hindu is born not made, a Sikh is made not born: an initiatory rite, which may be called baptism, is necessary before a man is entitled to be called a Sikh. The founder of the Sikh religion was Nanak Baba, who lived from the close of the fifteenth century till well on into the sixteenth: born in 1469, he died in 1538. He was a pious Hindu reformer, and has been styled a Hindu Martin Luther. His home was in the immediate neighbourhood of Lahore. The tenets of a celebrated Vaishnava teacher, a disciple of Ramanand, and himself the founder of a sect, named Kabir, are said to have had a great influence upon Nanak. A curious tradition centres round the name of Kabir. He is said to have been originally a Muhammadan weaver, who afterwards embraced the tenets of Hinduism. An anecdote told of him seems to point to there being some

truth in the story. It is related in a Hindi work that contains biographies of great Hindu reformers, styled the *Bhakta-Mala, or Garland of the Faithful.* Both Hindus and Muhammadans are said to have claimed the body of Kabir upon his death, the Hindus for its cremation, the Muhammadans for its burial. A dispute had arisen, when suddenly Kabir himself appeared, and ordered the disputants to look under the sheet that covered his terrestrial body: he then disappeared again as suddenly as he had appeared. On obeying his orders the disputants found only some beautiful flowers where the body had been: one-half of these were given to the Hindus to burn at their holy city, Benares: the other half were given to the Muhammadans, who buried them with great pomp and ceremony. A monastery in his honour still exists at Puri, and all pilgrims from Upper India to this day are entitled to receive a spoonful of rice-water from the priest in charge. He gives his name to a sect known as the Kabir-Panthis, many of whom are to be found in parts of the Central Provinces. The three main principles underlying the teaching of Nanak were the abolition of caste, the unity of the Godhead, and the obligation of purity. The canon of scripture recognized by all Sikhs received its name from him: it is styled Granth, which etymologically means 'The Volume': and in this respect it bears in its title only an analogy to the Christian Bible. In its original form it was a paraphrase of his writings. His followers were known as Sikhs, or disciples. As with so many men who have afterwards become distinguished, various anecdotes have been told of Nanak's early life and of his divine mission. By caste he was a Khattri, or member of the great writer caste, and by occupation a village accountant, whose business it would be to record the rights of villagers to their fields and lands in the register maintained for that purpose. Like the great Buddha as soon as he received his divine commission, he abandoned his family. He had dreamt that he had been carried up into the seventh heaven, and had there received the gift of prophecy, with a commission as preacher. He at once assumed the simple dress of an ascetic, and commenced his wanderings preaching the new faith. He is

said to have been received in audience by the Emperor Babar on one of his wanderings, and was accorded a very kindly welcome, as might have been expected from that hearty and genial monarch. He eventually returned to his family, and died peacefully in his old home. Such wandering saints are still to be met with throughout the length and breadth of India ; and the writer has encountered such on the slopes of the Himalayas, on the summits of the Blue Mountains of southern India, and in the great central plains. Seated at street corners in the sacred city of Benares are to this day to be seen venerable figures wrapped in silent meditation, whose history, if read, would reveal many a strange career. Some of them may have been men who in their prime led an active and strenuous life enough, but who had been fascinated throughout that life by the meditative and contemplative life of the ascetic, and who, as soon as release from the cares and anxieties of public life had come to them, had hastened to adopt it in their own persons, thus passing through the several stages of boyhood, studenthood, and household proprietorship to the final stage of philosophic and devout asceticism, and thereby putting the crown on an ideal Hindu existence, such as is depicted in the pages of their ancient and revered scriptures.

Another spiritual leader, or Guru, as he would be called, who is held in high estimation among the Sikhs, is Arjun, who in actual order ranks as the fifth Guru. He lived in the early part of the seventeenth century, and is especially noted as the compiler of the collection of sacred books known as the Adi-Granth, which may be translated, ' The volume as it was from the beginning.' It included the writings of Nanak, and extracts from the works of popular saints and poets, and especially from those of Jayadeva, the author of the widely-read *Gita Govinda*, or Song of the Divine Herdsman, who is recorded to have lived in the thirteenth century. Arjun appears to have been anxious to do for the Punjabi dialect what later Bengali writers did for their dialect, to raise it into a language more stately than the simple colloquial idiom, with the object of creating a language that might be used by all the Hindi-speaking races of Hindustan proper.

Just as the Bengali writers drew largely from Sanskrit sources to enrich the common colloquial Bengali, so Arjun incorporated many old Hindi forms and words. Arjun did not confine his attention to purely Hindu literature, but drew inspiration even from a Muhammadan poet, the Sufi, Shaik Farid ; amongst other sources also that he drew from were the writings of Kabir, and of the Mahratta poets of the Deccan, Namdeva, and Trilochan.

It was to be left to the tenth Guru, Govind Singh, a contemporary of the Emperor Aurangzib, to effect a great change in the character of the Sikh system. He gave it the impetus that caused it finally to set in the direction of militarism. His teachings were especially directed towards the creation of a great military nation, whose united forces were to be hurled against the Muhammadan rulers of India. Govind himself was one who had experienced, if not in his own person, at any rate in that of those nearest and dearest to him, his own father, and his only two surviving sons, the bitterness of persecution at the hands of the relentless foes of the early Sikh leaders, the followers of Islam. His father had been tortured to death, and his sons buried alive. Govind was only fifteen years of age when his father was thus treated : his murder made a lasting impression on his mind, and he determined to avenge the deed when he himself grew to man's estate. He fled to the hills and prepared for his future mission as the avenger by completing his education, which on its literary side included the study of Hindi, Persian, and even Sanskrit : on its physical side he practised himself in all feats of strength and skill both in sport and in arms. He may have had the example of the great Mahratta captain, Sivaji, before him in the physical part of his training. Sivaji has had many imitators : it is not so long ago that a secret society was unearthed at the head quarters of the Brahman hierarchy in India, having for its object the training of Mahratta youth, not only in feats of strength but of arms. Similar movements have not been unknown in these latter days in other parts of India, having for their object something more sinister than the mere training of youth in manly exercises. The great movement, known as the Boxer movement, that

stirred China to its depths not many years since, had a somewhat similar object. The very name is derived from one special feature of the training imparted. But there was righteousness in the cause of Govind: he had to combat persecution and intolerance, which were the key-notes of the policy of the later Moguls in their attitude towards the new religion. Very different has been the attitude of the British successors of the Moguls towards the religions, whether old or new, of the peoples of India. Sympathy and toleration have been its distinguishing traits, and no cause that has for its overthrow a Government actuated by such principles can by any stretch of imagination be described as a righteous cause.

Having completed that period of probation and preparation such as all great reformers have passed through at some period in their careers, Govind inaugurated his mission by a solemn sacrifice to that goddess, who, in her more sinister aspect is known as the dread goddess Kali, but in her more gracious aspect as the benign Durga. He then revived the ancient rite of baptism. The ceremony was a quaint one: sugar-candy being dissolved in pure water, the solution was stirred with a dagger: certain verses were recited and the new disciple drank a portion, the rest being sprinkled on his head and body: the shout, 'Wah! Guruji Kâ Khâlsa, victory to the Khâlsa of the Guru' was then raised. The origin of the term Khâlsa has been variously given. Some take it to mean, one's own property, and apply it to the Sikh confederation as the special creation of the Guru: others see in it the Persian Khâlisa, pure or genuine, and apply it to the central authority: and yet another interpretation is that it stands for Khulâsa, and means the free, or liberated ones, with special reference to the freedom of the Sikhs from the shackles of caste. Whatever be the derivation, the great military confederation of the Sikhs became henceforth known as the Khâlsa, and its spirit was breathed into it by the new teaching of Govind. Govind's teaching had for its main objects the separation of the Sikhs as a distinct body from the ranks of Hinduism, the object being concentration of power and the creation of a specially formidable weapon against the followers of Islam. Special

injunctions were given with regard to the abolition of caste, and specific rules of conduct were laid down in regard to dress, food, and worship: smoking and female infanticide were prohibited. The religion of the Sikhs, whether as taught by Nanak or by Govind, was of an eminently practical character: it regarded the position of the householder, as the head of his family and engaged in the daily business of life, as the most honourable of all lives: and it attached no special virtue, as did orthodox Hinduism, to the ascetic life as such. A writer has well said of it: 'It is a religion possessing a noble ideal, and a practical and social meaning which place it very high among the philosophical religions of the world.'

If Govind was the pioneer in the movement that gave a military organization to the Sikh confederacies, uniting them for military purposes into the Khâlsa, it was the great Maharaja, Ranjit Singh, who made of them that formidable fighting machine which they afterwards became, and who founded the Sikh kingdom, which was destined to try conclusions with the British. But the kingdom which he created fell almost as suddenly as it had risen under his immediate successors. Upon his death in 1839, the country became distracted with quarrels and struggles for supremacy, until at length the Sikh army obtained the mastery, and provoked the British to a war, which their own policy eventually made a war *à outrance*: and within ten years of their late ruler's death their country had become an integral part of the British Indian Empire. By their splendid loyalty during the strain of the great crisis of 1857, the Sikhs showed that they acknowledged the justice of the annexation of the Punjab. They have since been incorporated into the British military system, and are second to none in the British Army in courage and devotion to duty. A conspicuous example of this was seen during the frontier wars of 1897, when, at the fort of Saragheri, the whole garrison died to a man in its defence against overwhelming numbers of the enemy. A handsome memorial to their gallant memory has been erected in their sacred city, Amritsar, the Pool of Immortality, with one of their inspiring mottoes fittingly inscribed upon it, which was also the British sailorman's prompt

answer to the famous signal of England's greatest admiral, taiyâr, hamesha taiyâr, 'Ready, aye, Ready.' The actual proportion of Sikhs to the rest of the population of the Punjab, it may here be noted, is small. Out of a total population of over twenty millions, less than two millions are Sikhs.

Govind Singh died in 1708, a year after the death of the Emperor Aurangzib. By that time the organization of the Sikhs as a military power was practically complete. The Mogul empire had reached its height under Aurangzib, and it was against this empire, whose resources and power may be judged of by the fact that its revenue amounted at one time to over eighty millions sterling, that the Sikhs made their determined stand, possessed as has been well said, of only their faith, their swords, and their courage. Aurangzib, by his policy of intolerance, had succeeded before his death in alienating every Hindu State, and in the general alarm and distrust thus engendered amongst his subject Hindu populations the Sikhs found their opportunity. His persecutions and those of his immediate successors infused fresh spirit into these hardy warriors, and their numbers and power rapidly increased under the stress of the cruel circumstances of their age. From this time onwards they formed themselves into a number of confederacies, or Misls, as they have been called, under guerrilla chiefs. Each of these confederacies claimed independence, their leading principles being the watchwords adopted by all great republics, Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality : and their records show them fighting amongst themselves almost as much as with the Muhammadans at this early period in their history : only in presence of a common foe would they unite and place themselves under some one of their number who might happen at the time to be the most powerful. Gradually, however, great houses arose, and the lesser chiefs placed themselves for purposes of mutual protection under the greater chiefs, placing their horses and their weapons at the service of their chief, when required : thus, a species of feudal system arose, under which lands were held as a condition of military service. Leadership would often be recognized where exceptional skill or courage in feats of sport or of arms

was displayed by any one. The robber element was strong among the Sikhs of these early days, and there was not wanting a resemblance between the Sikh chieftains, and the Scottish border chieftains of early Scottish history. There was very little resemblance between them and the great freebooting tribes of Pindaris, and Dakaits: their exploits were not without an element of chivalry and romance, and there was an absence of that outrage and cruelty that characterized the operations of the Pindaris. The Sikh chieftains as often as not had some distinguishing cognomen: thus such designations as 'The five hundred one', given to a man for his prowess in battle, and 'The spotless one', given to another for his fine character, were not uncommon among them. The year 1761 was the turning-point in Sikh history. It witnessed the first stand made by the Khâlsa against a regular army: it is true the Sikhs were defeated, but they had gained that all-important requisite for future success, confidence in themselves and their cause. The conquest of the tract of country known as Sirhind, which lies to the south-east of Lahore, gave them a much-needed status. The number of confederacies was twelve, and their names are still to be found in the titles of many of the great Sikh families to this day. One distinguishing feature among the Sikhs was the honourable place assigned to their women, and the history of one of these confederacies, the Kanheyas, illustrates the immense influence which Sikh women wielded: it was a result of the liberal teaching of their great gurus, Nanak and Govind. It was into this confederacy that Ranjit Singh afterwards married.

The founder of the family to which Ranjit Singh belonged had been a bold and successful robber chieftain. It is recorded that he and his famous piebald mare, Desi, the country-bred, were known and feared throughout the whole countryside. Men marry early in the East, and Sardar Mahan Singh of the Sukar Chakia confederacy married into the celebrated Jhind family and became the father of Ranjit Singh at the age of fifteen. In those days of adventure and enterprise it was no uncommon thing for a boy to make acquaintance with war's alarms at a tender age, and Ranjit Singh was no exception to the rule. He

was very nearly killed in one of the many battles of the time at the age of ten : a Muhammadan chief had succeeded in climbing on to the elephant on which the youthful Ranjit Singh was mounted, and was only cut down just in time. Thus his warlike instincts were early aroused. At the age of sixteen he determined to throw off the tutelage he had hitherto been subjected to by his mother, and his still more famous mother-in-law, who were both in their way mighty Amazons. He shut up his mother in a fortress where she remained for the rest of her life. He had more difficulty, however, in disposing of his masterful mother-in-law. She had, it is true, encouraged his taste for fighting, and so far as fighting was a necessity in that strenuous age, he owed her a considerable debt : but in other directions her influence had been distinctly bad. Her aim had been to weaken the character and the health of the young prince so as to render him eventually unfit for ruling, so that she might keep the power in her own hands. The writer has seen many instances where disastrous results have followed from the exercise of such evil influences on the bodies and minds of young princes on the part of members of a family who have interested motives in thus weakening the character of the heir. It may be done in a variety of ways which it is unnecessary to detail here, but one specially bad case came under his observation where the insidious use of bhang, a preparation of hemp, in food, carried over a considerable period, had effectually weakened the mind and character of a young prince. At the same time the writer has known another young prince who possessed sufficient force of character to master fate, instead of being mastered by it. But it demands the possession of an exceptionally strong personality to overcome these malign influences where they do exist, as they undoubtedly do, but, of course, by no means generally. Ranjit Singh early showed that he possessed the character required to counteract them, and it was not long before he succeeded in shutting up the masterful lady, his mother-in-law, in a fortress, where she eventually died.

Ranjit Singh's great opportunity came during one of the campaigns of the Afghan king, Zaman Shah. The Afghans still claimed suzerainty over the Punjab, but they

were no longer its masters, and they made incursions periodically with the view of restoring their influence. The name of this Afghan monarch was long held in dread throughout India, and even the British feared an incursion into their southern provinces of the Afghan armies; they knew that their great enemy in the south, Tipu Sultan, was continually intriguing with Zaman Shah to come to his assistance and help him in his cherished design of 'driving the accursed infidels into the sea' whence they had come. At the very time, indeed, when Ranjit Singh was commencing his military career at the age of sixteen, Zaman Shah had received a pressing invitation from Tipu to invade India, and in 1797 he was indeed marching through the Punjab, to the great alarm of the British Government in India. Sir Alfred Lyall has shown what good reason the British had to dread an incursion of the Afghans at that time: he has said: 'The whole of North India was stirred by his coming, the Muhammadans were preparing to join his standard, the Oudh ruler was incapable of making any effective resistance, and if the Afghan monarch had pushed on to Delhi there would have been an outbreak of anarchy and perilous confusion. Such a formidable diversion would undoubtedly have drawn northward every available English regiment for the protection of the Bengal frontier; but in 1798 Shah Zaman was obliged to return hurriedly to guard his own western provinces from the Persians.' It was in the course of this retreat that Ranjit Singh first attracted the attention of the Afghan monarch, and performed that feat that laid the foundation of his military supremacy. The story has been thus told: 'The Afghan king, Zaman Shah, had lost some guns when crossing the Jhilam in flood: he promised the city and district of Lahore, together with the title of Raja, to Ranjit Singh if he would recover them and send them to him. Ranjit Singh recovered the guns, and assumed the title of Raja.' Lahore was at the time in the possession of two Sikh Sardars, who had themselves captured it from the Afghans by a stratagem, making their entry into the place one dark night by means of a drain, and capturing the deputy-governor, whom they found quietly enjoying himself at a nautch party. Ranjit Singh succeeded in

making himself master of the place. Not long afterwards he also succeeded in gaining possession of Amritsar. There was a celebrated gun in the city known as the Zamzamma gun, which had belonged to Ranjit Singh's grandfather : he had asked the Sikh Sardar, who held Amritsar, to hand it over to him : the Sardar had refused, with the result that he was attacked by Ranjit Singh and lost Amritsar. Ranjit Singh now had the advantage of having in his possession both the Sikh capitals, Lahore, the political, and Amritsar, the religious capital.

Ranjit Singh's rise to prominence synchronized with the arrival in India of the great British pro-consul, the Marquess Wellesley, and it was not without its bearing upon the fortunes of the British that he should have been thus engaged in carving out a dominion for himself in that State that was contiguous to the passes from which the great invaders had come into India from the north-west. Sir Alfred Lyall has described the effect on the political situation in India of the rise of the Sikh nationality in Upper India. He has said : 'Thenceforward the Sikhs were not only able to hold the line of the Indus river against fresh invaders, they also cut off the channels of supply between Central Asia and the Muhammadan powers to the south of the Sutlej, who were, moreover, kept in constant alarm by this actively aggressive community on their northern frontier. The effect was to maintain among the fighting powers in northern India an equilibrium that was of signal advantage to the English by preserving their north-west frontier unmolested during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, a critical period when they were fully occupied with Mysore and the western Mahrattas.' Had not Ranjit Singh succeeded in creating a strong Sikh kingdom in the Punjab, which formed a barrier against incursions from the great centres of Muhammadan aggression, the task that the Marquess Wellesley had set himself to, of consolidating the British possessions, might have been rendered far harder than it actually was. While the Sikh monarch was consolidating his power, the British were also consolidating theirs, and their consolidation had one effect, which could not have been altogether palatable to him. By the time it was completed the thin

red line had reached and absorbed Delhi and formed an impenetrable barrier against his own further advance southwards. He seems to have had a prescience that it would not remain even there long: he is said to have remarked one day: 'The whole of Hindustan will soon be red.'

After a preliminary trial of strength with the British, the Sikh chieftains to the south of the Sutlej had first made a Treaty with Ranjit Singh, who was exceedingly anxious to draw them within his own sovereignty. When he showed his hand too plainly, and they realized that he would never rest content till he had absorbed their territories into his own, they decided to throw in their lot with the British: and they petitioned the British that they might be allowed to come under their protection. The British hesitated for some time before eventually according a favourable answer to their petition: they were unwilling to embroil themselves with the Sikh Maharaja. There were fears at the time of French designs upon India, and it was thought that Ranjit Singh might call in the assistance of the French. Only when these fears were finally dispelled, did they agree to the wishes of the Cis-Sutlej chiefs. By the Treaty made with Ranjit Singh in 1809, in which Metcalfe took so prominent a part, the Maharaja renounced all claims to the Sikh territories that lay south of the Sutlej. Thus a barrier was set up finally against any further progress south of the Sikh Maharaja. Ranjit Singh had taken long to come to the decision he eventually came to, and it was only the patience and firmness of the young English envoy, in whom he recognized the embodiment of those great qualities, that he knew from the reports of his news-writers were pre-eminently the characteristics of the man who had dispatched young Metcalfe on his mission, the Governor-General, Lord Minto, and behind him of the great British nation, that caused him to bow to inevitable necessity, but having bowed he faithfully observed his obligations to the hour of his death. Besides, he realized that it was no mean advantage that he should be allowed a free hand to pursue his career of aggrandizement to the west and to the north. Just so had the great Mahratta chieftain, Madhava Rao Scindia, bowed to the inevitable when confronted with the statesmanlike per-

sonality of another great British Ruler, Warren Hastings, in whom he had recognized as great a master of statecraft as himself.

Ranjit Singh was not long in extending his conquests in those directions still left open to him to the south-west, the north-west, and the north. He added to his dominions in succession, Multan, Peshawar, and Kashmir. Thus by the year 1820 his power was absolute throughout the Punjab, from the river Sutlej to the Indus. By 1833 he had obtained Peshawar by cession from the exiled Afghán monarch, Shah Shuja. In 1835 he succeeded in defeating an attempt made by Dost Mahomed to wrest Peshawar from his possession. He had met determined opposition on more occasions than one in his career of conquest, and he had not scrupled to use the weapons of his age, trickery and treachery, in carrying out his aims. The most stubborn resistance he encountered was perhaps at Multan. This fort was very gallantly defended by its governor, a Muhammadan Nawab ; when a breach had been made in the walls by that great gun on which Ranjit Singh pinned his faith, the Zamzamma gun, the old Nawab stood in the breach fighting to the last with his eight sons : and the Sikh troops only effected their entry over the dead bodies of the old governor and five of his sons, who were killed in the assault. Ranjit Singh was not above illustrating in his own person the fable of King Stork and the Frogs. A fortress which he was particularly anxious to gain possession of was being besieged, and its defenders begged for his assistance in repelling the besiegers : he was only too glad to avail himself of the opportunity, and once inside, he took possession and kept it. Ranjit Singh modelled his army on the English system, and converted it into a formidable fighting machine. He had seen for himself what a disciplined infantry could accomplish and, contrary to the usual custom of the Sikhs, he made his infantry a more important arm even than his cavalry. He also adopted the English system of voluntary enlistment. Naturally with so many chances of distinction that service under his auspices gave, military service was exceedingly popular. Many of his most famous generals were foreigners.

Among the most distinguished of these was the Italian,

General Avitabile, who, like the famous French general, de Boigne, who had been in the service of the Mahratta chieftain, Madhava Rao Scindia, was not only a military genius, but a skilled civil administrator. He was largely employed in administrative work in the Peshawar district, and his name was long remembered with awe on the countryside of that wild borderland. Much, however, cannot be said for Ranjit Singh's ordinary civil administration of his dominions. Rack-renting formed its chief feature: a bare subsistence was left to the cultivators, and all commodities were heavily taxed. One method of collecting revenue was by marching an army through the conquered districts every two or three years to sweep up all arrears of revenue due. A curious illustration showing how natural this system appeared to the people is given by one of Ranjit Singh's biographers. Many years after, at the time when the British had just conquered the Sikhs in the first Sikh war, and a British Resident was assisting the Council of Regency to administer the country, a native official approached the Resident and mentioning a certain district, said to him: 'There are nearly two years' revenue unpaid, so it is about time to send an army.' A comparison between the prosperous state of the Punjab as it is at this day, after many years of orderly British rule, and as it was under Sikh rule, is, from the point of view of the British administrator a sufficient answer to a question that has sometimes been asked, namely, whether the Punjab has materially benefited by its change of rulers. Proverbial sayings have been defined to be the collective wisdom derived from experience of a people: a popular saying common in the Punjab would seem to show that in the minds of the people of the province also there can be no doubt of the benefits that have accrued to them from the change. The saying is:—'Under British administration the Punjab has been blessed with Sawan—the most beneficial month of all the months of the year to an agricultural country like India, being the month of early rain—and with Karm, kindness; under Sikh administration in its worst aspects, the Punjab was desolated with Mula—that destructive insect that devours corn.' If it is true, as has been said by a competent authority, that

with all the anomalies that still exist in the Native States of India, ' people do not wish to exchange their despotism for the more benevolent rule of British India,' the converse, as another competent authority has said, is also true; there is no keenness shown by those who have experienced this more beneficent rule in British territory, to exchange it for the more despotic rule of the Native State. And yet true as this may be, there are still not a few pathetic figures remaining in India like Sir Alfred Lyall's ' Old Pindari ', who long for the old order of things, which it is to be hoped in the true interests of India, has gone for ever. ' The old order changeth, yielding place to new.'

It has been said that the secret of Ranjit's success in founding his kingdom was a characteristic he possessed in common with other great conquerors, ' a strong and stubborn persistence, slow, sure, and irresistible as the rising tide.' This persistence, indeed, he showed also in other directions, whenever he had set his heart on the attainment of something he coveted. Two anecdotes are told of him which aptly illustrate this trait, one connected with the acquisition of the famous jewel, known as the Koh-i-Nur, the Mountain of Light, the other in connexion with a celebrated mare, named Laili. The great diamond is said to have originally belonged to one of the Pandava chiefs of Mahabharata story. Eventually it came into the possession of the Mogul emperors: it passed from them into the hands of Nadir Shah, the Persian king, who sacked Delhi in 1739: thence it fell to the Afghan, Ahmad Shah Abdali, and thus eventually passed into the possession of Shah Shuja, at one time monarch of Afghanistan, but when Ranjit Singh made his acquaintance he was living in exile. Ranjit Singh invited him to take up his residence at Lahore: on his arrival, Ranjit Singh lost no time in demanding the jewel. Upon Shah Shuja denying that he had it, and declaring that he had placed it with a banker for safe keeping, the old Maharaja lost his temper and placed a guard round his guest's palace: all who left the house were searched, and no one was allowed to enter with food. Yielding to this treatment so contrary to all the laws of Oriental hospitality, Shah Shuja agreed to surrender the jewel on the condition that Ranjit Singh would guarantee

him his friendship and protection. This, the Sikh Maharaja, taking an oath on his most sacred volume, the Granth, promised solemnly to do. Shah Shuja thereupon invited the Maharaja to an audience, in order that he might receive the diamond in person. Ranjit Singh duly proceeded to the Shah's palace, where he was courteously received in audience. In the East when visits are interchanged, it is customary for the host to remark as he receives his visitor, 'You have brought me to great honour by your visit.' The visitor replies, 'I assure you, the honour is mine.' The customary greetings over, the two monarchs sat down, and for a full hour by the clock they remained thus seated, facing each other in solemn silence. Then Ranjit Singh took upon himself to remind his host of the object of his visit. Shah Shuja gave the signal, and the celebrated diamond was ceremoniously brought in wrapped only in an old and faded cloth, such as to this day, the most priceless jewels may not uncommonly, in many Oriental State treasuries, be seen wrapped up in. The Maharaja wasted no more time, but promptly seized it, and left the audience chamber without troubling his head about going through the customary formula of farewell which Oriental etiquette demands, and which takes this form: having first asked his host's permission to take his leave, his visitor remarks to his host—'Keep me in kindly recollection,' and the host thus responds, 'Keep me also in kindly recollection.' Having obtained possession thus discourteously of the famous diamond, the Sikh Maharaja afterwards seized all the jewels that remained in the possession of the Shah. The Koh-i-Nur afterwards, on the final conquest of the Punjab by the British, passed into the possession of the Sovereigns of Great Britain, and now lies with the other regalia of the Crown in the Tower of London.

Sikh gentlemen have ever been noted horsemen: history does not record that any of the distinguished Italian generals who trained their armies were great horsemen, but certainly in the Italy of to-day are to be found some of the most finished horsemen in the world. The writer was once privileged to see a late Sikh chief of Patiala and some of his Sardars taking a steeplechase course, and their perform-

ances were by no means inferior to those of the most celebrated of Italian chevaliers. Ranjit Singh was always most passionately fond of horses, and in his prime would often spend the whole day in the saddle, and he was ever a keen sportsman. He always kept up a large stud of Arabs, Persians, and country-breds, and he always received with special pleasure a gift of English horses such as the Governors-General of India occasionally sent him. The anecdote that has been told about him and the mare 'Laili' cannot be vouched for as strictly accurate, and there is some doubt as to the actual identity of the animal, but it is a story that aptly illustrates the persistence with which, when he had once set his heart on anything, he never rested till he had secured it. The story goes that the Governor of Peshawar possessed a mare famed for its beauty throughout Afghanistan and the Punjab. This was some years before Peshawar had been formally ceded to him. He sent expedition after expedition to demand the surrender to him of the mare. At last he succeeded, but only after an enormous expenditure of blood and treasure. The quest is said to have cost him sixty lakhs of treasure and the lives of 12,000 of his soldiers. Lord William Bentinck is recorded to have been shown the animal when he visited the Maharaja in 1831. Baron Hügel also, when he visited Lahore at a later date, was shown an animal which he was told was the identical animal: it was a dark grey horse with black points, some sixteen hands high, magnificently caparisoned and with gold bangles on its legs. Surely no more costly animal has ever figured in the annals of any stud, even the most famous and historic.

It may be of interest to note something of the personality of some of the native officials at the court of Ranjit Singh. He employed in his civil administration both Hindus and Muhammadans, and in order to keep the goodwill of the Sikh priests, to the most orthodox of whom such employment of officials who were not Sikhs was not altogether pleasing, as it seemed contrary to the tenets of their religion, he propitiated them by large gifts of money and lands to them personally, and of offerings to their temples. His most famous minister was the Muhammadan nobleman, Fakir Azizudin. It has been said that it was largely due to

his wise counsels that peace was so long maintained with the English: indeed Lord Ellenborough is recorded to have styled him ‘ The protector of the friendship of both States ’. He was an exceedingly liberal-minded man: this may be illustrated by the famous reply he made to Ranjit Singh when questioned as to his preference for Muhammadanism or Hinduism: ‘ I am,’ he replied, ‘ a man floating in the midst of a mighty river. I turn my eye towards the land, but can distinguish no difference in either bank.’ He was also a poet, and an authority attributes to him the line which has won the admiration of all who appreciate the beauties of Persian poetry, and they are not a few: ‘ Forget yourself, and leave your work with God.’ One of Ranjit Singh’s officials is said to have owed his promotion to the rank of royal chamberlain, whose business it was to superintend the Darbar, to his faithful vigilance on a certain historic occasion, when in a very subordinate position. He was on duty one night at the palace, when the spirit moved the Maharaja to go forth into the streets disguised, after the fashion of the great Sultan Haroun-al-Raschid, to see what his faithful lieges were about. The sentry had not been made acquainted with his proposed escapade: when he returned to the palace, he found himself shut out: the sentry arrested him and kept him for the night in the guard-house, either actually not recognizing him, or professing not to do so. Anyhow his fidelity received its due meed of praise, and he was rewarded by being promoted, first to the position of personal attendant to the Maharaja and afterwards to the rank of chamberlain. Another of Ranjit Singh’s officials was a celebrated mechanician, who is said to have invented a clock that showed the hour, the day of the month, and the changes of the moon. Mechanics form a not uncommon recreation in Oriental courts to this day. Lord Curzon speaking some time back on the subject of Native States referred to this taste and to the capacity shown by many of the present rulers of these States. Thus he referred to one of them in these terms: ‘In Gwalior the present ruler was Maharaja Scindia, a most remarkable man, one, he imagined, of the few ruling potentates in the world who was equally capable of commanding a regiment or driving an engine. Indeed the Maharaja was a sort of

steam engine of physical and intellectual energy, because there was nothing in the State of Gwalior which the Maharaja himself did not originate, organize, superintend and carry through to a final issue.' Similarly, the writer is personally acquainted with a prince who, besides being a good scholar and a practical chemist, engineers his own steamers, keeps his own foundry, shoes his own horses and those of any neighbour who will send them to his stables, and is a thorough sportsman to boot.

The Maharaja's health began to fail him in 1838, when he began to suffer from paralysis : he had led a very hard life, and he had weakened his naturally robust constitution by his occasional bouts of hard drinking. He tried a variety of remedies for his complaint, and amongst them, he had recourse to those specifics of electricity and galvanism which are becoming such popular forms of treatment in these days. In his earlier attacks he had allowed English doctors to treat him, but during his last illness he would allow no one to see him but his devoted minister, Fakir Azizudin. On the day of his death he had some twenty-five lakhs of rupees distributed as alms to the poor, and to the priests of the two places which rank as holy in the estimation of all Sikhs, one as the place where the founder of their religious system was born, the other as that where he died. Having performed this act of piety, the old Maharaja had himself moved from his bed to a carpet on the ground and passed peacefully away in the year 1839. Ranjit Singh, though not of prepossessing appearance—he was short of stature and disfigured by small-pox, having lost the sight of one eye—was yet a man of striking personality. Even when old and almost blind, feeble, and paralysed, it is recorded of him that he possessed a complete ascendancy over his chiefs : and an anecdote has been told that will serve to illustrate this. When one of his ministers was visiting the English Governor-General at Simla on one occasion, an officer put this question to him : 'In which eye is the Maharaja blind?' The minister's reply was : 'The splendour of his face is such that I have never been able to look close enough to discover.' Allowing for the usual Oriental love of hyperbole, this answer certainly shows that the great Sikh Maharaja inspired profound respect.

He was a born ruler of men, who obeyed him by instinct as it were: and as his biographer has well said: 'The measure of his greatness was the control which he exercised over the whole Sikh population of the Punjab, the nobles, the priests, and the people.'

The British had every reason to be grateful to him, not alone on account of the fidelity with which he observed his engagements, but for his keeping the peace as he did in the kingdom that he founded practically on their borders. That he performed no ordinary service in thus ruling his kingdom with a strong hand, may be judged of by the composite nature of the peoples he had to rule. A reference to the composition of that famous regiment known as the Guides, and to the character of the men composing it, will show what his work was. This regiment has been described as being largely composed of 'the rough tribesmen of the frontier regions of India—Afridis, Pathans, Khuttucks, Sikhs, and Ghurkas, to whom fighting was neither a profession nor means of gain, but simply a necessary condition of life'. To have ruled a kingdom largely made up of such elements was of itself no ordinary feat. The anarchy that followed his death, and which eventually resulted in that aggression on British territory which led to the Sikh wars, and the final absorption of the Punjab into the British dominions, may be taken as a measure of the service he rendered the British during his lifetime by preventing disorder on British frontiers, but his special service was the erection of a strong bulwark against any further invasions from Central Asia and Afghanistan; whereby he afforded an opportunity to the British for the peaceful development of their empire. His courage, perseverance, sagacity, and real manliness will ever be remembered wherever such qualities are honoured, while his faults, and they were not a few, will be forgotten: and he may well be allowed to stand on a pedestal above his fellow men and to rank with others of the world's great conquerors and rulers.

CHAPTER VIII

THE EARLY PORTUGUESE SETTLEMENTS IN INDIA

ALBUQUERQUE, 1453–1515

THE subject of this sketch, Affonso de Albuquerque, or as his countrymen styled him, Albuquerque the Great, takes the first rank, both as a commander and an administrator, among the many great men whom Portugal sent to the East during the century of her domination in India, from 1500 to 1600 A. D., during which period the Portuguese practically enjoyed a monopoly of Oriental trade, so far at least as European nations were concerned. It was Vasco da Gama who had first opened out the road to India for those nations of the Far West whose territories bordered on the open ocean. The long wars of the Portuguese with the Moors had made of them a race of hardy warriors, fit to be adventurers and explorers in far distant lands. These wars had also had another effect upon their character which was afterwards destined to have its bearing upon their relations with Eastern peoples, and which was doubtless one cause of their failure to establish a permanent dominion in the East. Their religion became tinged with a spirit of fanaticism and bigotry. As Sir W. W. Hunter has well said: 'Their national temper had been formed in their contest with the Moors at home. They were not traders, but knights errant and crusaders, who looked on every pagan as an enemy of Portugal and of Christ.' This spirit of fanaticism was especially directed against Muhammadanism, but Muhammadanism it must be remembered, at this period of the history of the world, was a great aggressive power in Europe. Not the least of the services rendered by Portugal to Europe by her determined and successful efforts to beat off all attempts of the Muhamma-

dan sovereigns at Alexandria and Constantinople, to resist European predominance in Eastern waters, was the set-back she then gave to Muhammadan ascendancy in Europe. Sir Alfred Lyall has said in this connexion: 'It may be thought fortunate that even Solyman the Magnificent, in the height of his glory, failed in his efforts to expel the Portuguese from the Indian Ocean; for his success might have been disastrous to Eastern Christendom. If the Turkish Sultan who at the opening of the sixteenth century was supreme in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, and whose fleets swept the Mediterranean, could have kept the Indian trade to its ancient and direct course through Egypt and Syria, the wealth that he might thus have secured must have added prodigiously to the force of his arms by sea and land. A colossal military empire upon the Bosphorus, commanding the avenues of Asiatic trade, might even in our own days overawe half Europe, and would have been irresistible three hundred years ago.' And yet another service rendered to Europe by Portugal was that she was the first of European nations to introduce Western ideas into the Eastern world and thus prepared the way for that close connexion between the West and the East that now exists.

The Portuguese timed their arrival in India well; the monarchs and chieftains, whom they first came in contact with, were Hindus. The most powerful potentate in the south of India at the time was Narsingha, the Hindu Raja of Vijayanagar. If the Muhammadans on the west coast had no share in the government of the country, they still wielded a good deal of influence owing to their possession of a monopoly of trade. It was from these Muhammadans who were mostly of Arab origin, and whose descendants are known to this day as Moplahs, that the Portuguese were to encounter the greatest hostility, and not unnaturally so, for they were destined to be their greatest rivals. Indeed, it was the fierce enmity of the Muhammadan merchants that caused the early European competitors for trade to take the attitude of invaders. The first Portuguese visitors to India had no more idea of establishing a Portuguese dominion in the East than had the early English adventurers of the reign of Elizabeth. The position of a military and

ruling power was forced on the Portuguese by the trend of events as it was afterwards forced on the Dutch in the Eastern Archipelago, and the English in India. The Hindu rulers were prepared to give a hearty welcome to any competitors for the trade thus monopolized by the Muhammadans, and it is on record that when the first Portuguese expedition under Vasco da Gama reached Calicut in the autumn of 1498, it was well received by the then ruler, the Zamorin. But the intrigues of the Arab merchants were too much for the Zamorin's ministers, and the Portuguese captain could only procure a few articles of merchandise, and eventually returned to Portugal by way of Cannanore. A second expedition appears to have been sent, the commander of which tried to establish a factory, but the Arab traders resenting this action, stirred up a riot, during which the Portuguese agent was killed. The commander returned to Portugal and reported the occurrence there. The king at this time was Emmanuel, a name that will recall that of the present young ruler of Portugal, who so recently ascended the throne under such tragic circumstances. He saw that the only chance of developing a prosperous trade was to place Portuguese agents at the different ports, and to keep a sufficient force in Indian seas for their protection. He had in 1502 obtained from Pope Alexander VI, a Bull, constituting him 'Lord of the Navigation, Conquests, and Trade of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, and India'. He now conferred the style and designation of Admiral of the Indian Seas on Vasco da Gama and sent him forth on another expedition to India, with special orders to bring the Zamorin of Calicut to account for his want of protection of the Portuguese agent who had been killed in the riot. Vasco da Gama, on arrival off the Malabar coast, made an alliance with the Rajas of Cochin and Cannanore against the Zamorin, and bombarded his capital. He returned to Portugal with a cargo of pepper, taken in at Quilon, the Rani of which place had invited him to trade there.

In the year 1505, the King of Portugal inaugurated a new departure; the idea seems to have occurred to him that a Portuguese empire might with ease be established in the East. Though trade was still the chief end in

view, he realized that he must be prepared for a very severe struggle with the Muhammadan powers who had so long had the monopoly of trade in Eastern waters; the struggle was to be no longer one with the Moplahs only, but with the Muhammadans of Egypt, Persia, and Arabia. The time had come, therefore, when it would be necessary for Portugal to maintain a more powerful navy and army in Asia than she had hitherto done. Dom Francisco de Almeida was accordingly dispatched to the East, as the first Portuguese Viceroy of India. Some severe fighting followed before the Portuguese could establish their footing in India itself. In one of the great naval battles a son of Almeida especially distinguished himself; he had kept up a running fight with the enemy for two days; his ship was surrounded on every side, and though one of his legs had been broken early in the fight by a cannon-ball, he had a chair placed on deck, where he sat and gave his orders as coolly as ever; he was afterwards struck by another cannon-ball on the breast, and as the record proceeds, 'the young hero—he was not quite twenty-one—expired without knowing what the word surrender meant.' The Nawab of Diu, who had been assisting the Emir Husain, the Mamcluke Sultan of Egypt's admiral in this engagement, is recorded to have treated his Portuguese prisoners kindly, and to have written a letter to the Portuguese viceroy regretting that he had been unable to find the prince's body to give it honourable burial: at the same time he congratulated the father on the glory his son had acquired in his last combat on earth. Dom Francisco was eventually superseded in his viceroyalty by Affonso de Albuquerque in the year 1509. Almeida had been reluctant to hand over his high office, and for a time had succeeded in postponing the evil day by imprisoning his destined successor in the fort at Cannanore. He was at last brought to a more reasonable frame of mind and finally left Indian seas, only to fall a victim to some African savages at Saldanha Bay, where he had landed in order to assist some of the sailors of his fleet who had quarrelled with the inhabitants of the place over some stolen sheep.

Affonso de Albuquerque was of royal descent, though

the bar sinister crossed his escutcheon. One of his ancestors was a Portuguese king known as King Denys, who appears to have been a remarkable man in many ways. He reigned for half a century, and as his sobriquet, 'The Labourer,' implies, would appear to have been a man of peace. He was a good administrator and no mean poet. Albuquerque had spent his boyhood in the court of Affonso the Fifth, where he had been one of the royal pages: he was educated with the king's sons, with one of whom, who afterwards came to the throne as John II, he became very intimate. One of the subjects he was taught was mathematics, the necessary basis for that science of navigation which had long been a favourite study at the Portuguese court, whose princes were foremost in its practical application, and one of whom has been worthily designated 'The Navigator'. This course of study proved of inestimable advantage to him in later years, when he was sometimes called upon to act as his own pilot. The atmosphere of the court was favourable to the development of a fine character. The king himself, known as 'The Chivalrous', delighted in all that made for manliness: he was devoted also to literature and especially to the romances of mediaeval chivalry, and possessed a fine library. The real simplicity of his character is revealed in the story told of the reply he made to the historian of the day: he had been asked how he would like to have the chronicles of his reign written: he replied simply, 'Tell the truth.' It is no wonder that with such an environment Albuquerque became the great man that history has recorded he did become. The ten years of military service that he spent in Morocco gave him that experience of the art of war that was so useful to him in after life: at the same time it imbued him with that life-long hatred of all things Muhammadan which accounted for much of the ruthlessness of his bearing towards Muhammadans when he encountered them as enemies in the East at a later period of his career. When his friend, John II, became king, Albuquerque became his Master of the Horse, and continued with him in that capacity for some fourteen years down to the year 1495. His intercourse with this wise and enlightened king still further ripened his intellect, and

as his biographer states, ‘ trained him to thoughts of great enterprises.’ King John had long dreamt of a direct sea-route to the East Indies, and doubtless his talks with Albuquerque had inspired him with similar dreams for establishing Portuguese predominance in Asia. On the death of ‘ The Perfect King ’, as John was designated, Albuquerque again saw service against the Moors.

His opportunity came at last. In 1503 he was dispatched to the East in command of an expedition ; and though he had not much to do on this occasion he learnt much that was useful to him in later years : he saw the Indian coast for the first time, and was enabled to study on the spot some of the problems presented by the establishment of Portuguese influence on that coast. He returned to Portugal the following year, where he was very favourably received by King Emmanuel. He placed before the king certain schemes which had for their object the destruction of the trade then carried on by Muhammadans. Among these schemes was one for closing up the old trade routes by the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf, and the opening up of a new ocean route, which the recent voyages of Vasco da Gama had shown to be feasible. The king entered heartily into these schemes, and the issue was the appointment, in 1506, of Albuquerque to a fresh command. He was dispatched to the East with a squadron of five ships with orders first to conquer and garrison Socotra, and when he had accomplished this, to take over supreme command of all the Portuguese possessions in the East from Dom Francisco de Almeida, and to assume the style and title of Viceroy. Albuquerque succeeded in capturing Socotra from the Muhammadans, erected a fort and left a garrison in possession, and thus secured a very important position whence he could issue and attack all ships passing into or out of the Red Sea. He then sailed for the Persian Gulf, where his great ambition was to get possession of Ormuz, which has been described as being at one time ‘ The richest jewel set in the ring of the world ’. He had a twofold object in view : one part of his plan was to interrupt and divert the Indian trade that went that way, the other to establish a direct trade between Persia and Europe. He appears

to have been successful in getting the Native ruler to declare himself a vassal of the King of Portugal, and he even obtained permission to erect a fortress. Meanwhile, however, dissensions arose among his captains, a not uncommon thing in these early days of adventure when so many men were fighting for their own hands. The story goes that Albuquerque had made up his mind to storm Ormuz to compel its ruler to give up to him certain deserters from his fleet, and that his captains had protested. They had given in their protest in writing, and their reasons for doing so would appear to be either a tribute to Albuquerque's masterfulness, or a recognition of the well-known effects of an Eastern climate in accentuating a naturally passionate temperament. It was such a letter as an Oriental might have written to any European superior officer, who had the reputation of having, in the expressive language of the East, 'a temper a bit hot.' 'Sir,' their letter ran, 'we do this in writing, because by word of mouth we dare not, as you always answer us so passionately.' The Native ruler soon got to hear of these dissensions and was quick to take advantage of them: he refused to surrender the deserters, and apparently withdrew his former concessions. Albuquerque succeeded in winning back the allegiance of his captains and bombarded the place, but nothing came of it; he was forced for the time to abandon his cherished design of building a fort at Ormuz; he sailed away for the time being, but he paid one more visit to Ormuz, and warned its ruler that 'he would not cut his beard until he had completed the fortress at Ormuz'. He eventually sailed for India to take up his viceroyalty: the reluctance of Almeida to give up office, and how it was overcome has been already related. Albuquerque assumed office on November 5th, 1509. He was now Viceroy of India, and he remained so practically till his death in 1515.

Albuquerque's new title was Governor and Captain-General of the Portuguese Possessions in Asia. He had the full powers usually accorded to a viceroy, and he received a special patent giving him authority to confer palace pensions on persons who had rendered meritorious services to the State. Having already made himself

acquainted with the state of affairs in India, he had a definite policy already shaped in his mind. Muhammadans were to be treated as enemies, Hindus as allies and friends. The guiding principle of his policy was complete Portuguese control over the trade of India. And an integral part of that policy was not only to hold command of the sea, but also to establish strongly fortified settlements on Indian soil. This, though it did not imply empire over the whole of the Indian continent, did mean empire over the regions which would thus be brought within the sphere of Portuguese influence. In Goa he saw a place well fitted to become the capital of such an empire: it possessed an excellent harbour for his ships, and was, moreover, in a central position, well situated, therefore, for expansion when the time came, though, as history has recorded, Portugal was never destined to expand into a great Eastern empire. The choice of Goa by Albuquerque was at the time a mark of his prudent statesmanship: its capture would not offend any of his Hindu allies, as it was, at this time, a Muhammadan possession: on the contrary, it would considerably enhance Portuguese prestige with the Hindu powers. The real master of Goa at the time was the King of Bijapur, a kingdom which had but recently been founded by that remarkable man Yusuf Adil Shah, the sole surviving son of Amurath II, Sultan of the Ottoman Turks. When his brothers had all been put to death during a struggle for the succession to the throne, he had been rescued by his mother, and handed over to the care of a Persian merchant, in whose household he had been practically a slave: he had then served in the ranks of the armies of the Muhammadan powers in the Deccan, and rose to high command: eventually, from being Governor of Bijapur, he became its king in 1489. Goa had greatly increased in wealth under his rule. The Hindu population, however, had found the rule of his Muhammadan governor oppressive to a degree, and they were not unprepared to welcome a change of rulers. The story goes, moreover, that their imaginations had been stirred by the prophecy of a Hindu ascetic, who had recently given out that a foreign race coming from a distant land would conquer Goa. When, therefore, Albuquerque ap-

peared before the city early in March, 1510, it was soon surrendered up to him; and it is recorded that he entered the city hailed with shouts of joy by the people, 'who showered on him flowers made of gold and silver.'

His triumph was but a short-lived one. The King of Bijapur soon advanced against the place with an overwhelming force, and Albuquerque had to retire to his ships at the mouth of the harbour. This was one of the most critical periods in his career, but it gave him the opportunity of displaying his high qualities as a commander. His was a gallant family; one of his nephews, Dom Antonio de Noronha, had especially distinguished himself, in a courageous attempt to cut out some fire-ships which the King of Bijapur was preparing to launch against the Portuguese fleet: he was mortally wounded in the attempt. In the commentaries of Albuquerque he is thus spoken of: 'There was not a single person in the fleet who was not deeply affected, but especially his uncle, in that he had been deprived of him at a season when he most needed his personal assistance, his advice, and his knightly example. He was a very brave cavalier, who never found himself placed in any position which caused him any fear: he was very virtuous, very God-fearing, and very truthful.' Famine and discontent among his own captains added to Albuquerque's difficulties. He had actually to put some of them in irons, and one young officer he publicly hanged for intriguing with Muhammadan women. The King of Bijapur made a very generous offer at this crisis: he offered to supply the Portuguese with provisions, saying that he wished to conquer them 'not by starvation, but by the sword'. Albuquerque rejected the offer and having collected all the food and wine that was left in the fleet for the use of the sick on board his own ship, he showed it to the messengers of the king when they visited him to take his decision. When the wind changed to a favourable quarter, he took the opportunity, and sailed away, but only with the full intention of returning some other day. 'He was not a man,' says his biographer, 'to be daunted by one failure: he had resolved that Goa should be the capital of Portuguese India, and he never rested till he had achieved his resolve.' He left in August, and

returned in November, having in the interval received reinforcements of ships and men. He made his spring towards the end of November, 1510, and again succeeded. Goa was now a possession of Portugal, and has remained so from that time up to now. Some of Albuquerque's young officers are recorded to have behaved with the greatest gallantry : one of them, Manoel de Lacerda, was wounded in the face with an arrow ; with the broken shaft still in the wound he still continued to fight on foot, and killed a Turkish horseman, and mounting his dead foe's horse, he was still fighting when Albuquerque noticed him, and came to his assistance. The story is thus told : ' As soon as Manoel de Lacerda beheld Affonso de Albuquerque, he dismounted from his charger and presented it to him. When Affonso de Albuquerque saw him with his armour all smirched with blood, he embraced him, and said : " Sir Manoel de Lacerda, I assure you I am greatly envious of you, and so would Alexander the Great have been, had he been here, for you look more gallant for an evening's rendezvous than the Emperor Aurelian." ' Sir Alfred Lyall has shown how ruthless the methods of the Portuguese were in their struggle for supremacy in Asia. The one blot on the fair fame of Albuquerque was the treatment he meted out to the conquered Muhammadans on this occasion. He ordered a massacre of the whole Muhammadan population of Goa, men, women, and children, and gave the city up to plunder for a space of three days. In order to be in a position to resist any attempt on the part of the King of Bijapur to recover the city, he made all haste to repair the walls and ramparts, and especially to rebuild the citadel, even working as a mason himself to expedite the work. His foresight was justified by the event, for when, during his absence, some two years after this date, Goa was straitly besieged by the Muhammadans, it managed to hold out till he came in person and raised the siege.

The conquest of Goa was of immense political importance to Portugal ; it gave that country a commercial and political capital in Asia, and it showed the Native rulers of the neighbouring States that Portugal had resolved henceforth to stand forth as a sovereign power amongst other sovereign

powers in India. The gallantry, moreover, of her sailors and soldiers had shown them that a new warrior race, whose prowess was not to be despised, had arisen in the East. The wealth of Goa soon passed into a proverb : it became known as ' Golden Goa ', and though its glory, as the historian has said, ' lasted but a century, it was during that period one of the most splendid cities on the face of the earth.' It is of interest to note, in view of the value of Goa to the Portuguese, that there was a time when the Government of Portugal had contemplated the advisability of its abandonment. There were two points of view in Portugal on the subject of expansion, just as there were in England some two and a half centuries later. One very strong party, represented by Almeida and his followers, advocated the claims of commerce as against empire ; the views of this party gained strength at a later date, when there seemed imminent risk of the recapture of Goa by the Muhammadans during Albuquerque's temporary absence from its command when he was engaged in his further ventures in the Far East. It is recorded that Albuquerque was ordered by the king to summon a general council of his captains and chief officers in India to discuss the question of the advisability of its retention. He carefully refrained from convening this council till after his successful relief of the place. When the council eventually met, his captains were unanimous in opposing its abandonment. Albuquerque forwarded the opinions of the council to the king in an able dispatch in which he reviewed the whole question of Portuguese policy, and showed clearly that the abandonment of Goa would mean an end to the dominion of Portugal in the East. The king accepted these views, and so the fiat went forth in favour of empire as against mere commerce, though commerce was still to be alike the rationale and the mainstay of that empire.

One of the most thriving commercial marts in the Far East at this period in the history of Asia was Malacca, a port on the Malay Peninsula. All the produce of Bengal, Burmah, Sumatra, Siam, China, and the Spice Islands, found its way there, and was collected by Muhammadan merchants for transport to Europe. It was the capital of a Muhammadan sultan, whose ancestors are said to have

originally come from Java, and to have been converted to the faith of Islam some two hundred years before. Albuquerque now determined to venture on the conquest of this important place, and thus deal another fatal blow at the Muhammadan monopoly of trade in one of their chief commercial routes between Asia and Europe, for Malacca was the key to the navigation of the Indian Archipelago. Albuquerque found an excuse for his attack in the treatment which had been accorded by its ruler, at the instigation of some Muhammadan merchants, to certain Portuguese traders who had been landed at the port by a Portuguese squadron in the year 1509, and who had established a commercial settlement with a factor at its head. It is recorded that a plot had been formed to invite the officers of the squadron to a banquet at which they were all to be massacred. The plot was revealed by a woman of Java who had fallen in love with a man of Portugal, and had swum out to the fleet to give warning. The officers did not land, but the traders on shore were attacked and made prisoners. The squadron appears to have sailed away to take the news to Albuquerque; the prisoners, meanwhile, being left to their fate. In May, 1511, Albuquerque arrived off Malacca; he found that the factor and many of his companions were still prisoners, and some weeks passed in negotiations for their surrender up to him. Albuquerque declined to make a Treaty with the ruler of the place till they were given up to him; the sultan, for his part, was equally determined to get a Treaty signed first. Meanwhile Albuquerque wrote to the factor that he and his fellow prisoners must continue to possess their souls in patience, and he received a reply from the factor couched in gallant terms, to the effect that he would rather lose his life than that the honour of Portugal should receive any affront or discomfiture, and he added that if a decision had been come to that the city should be attacked, by all means let the attack be made at once without thought of his or his companions' safety. Albuquerque took prompt action, and, as always in the East, the bold course proved the safest course: the sultan released his prisoners, who were able to give the Portuguese commander valuable information as to the best place for him to attack. He

had resolved to attack, notwithstanding the sultan's compliance with his demands so far as surrender of the prisoners went, as he had made up his mind that a fort must be built there to secure the trade of the place. On his first attack he had established himself in the place pointed out by the factor as the key to the whole position : his soldiers, however, got out of hand, set fire to parts of the city, and then retired, wearied, to their ships. Albuquerque then called a council of war of his chief captains in order to secure their co-operation in a second attack ; this was a complete success, and it was not long before he had laid the foundations of his new fortress.

Men of every race were to be found in Malacca, Hindus from both sides of India, Arabs, Chinese, Javanese, and of course, Malays. Albuquerque continued the system of government of these different races that he found in existence at the time of his conquest. There were four principal officers, each of whom held the title of Shah-i-Bandar (Captain of the Port) : they had jurisdiction over the four chief communities of merchants, each captain being of the same nationality as the particular community whose interests he was supposed to look after. Thus there was a Chinese, a Javanese, a Guzerati, and a Bengali captain of the port. Albuquerque seems to have conciliated the majority of these communities by his tact and firmness : only towards the Malays does he appear to have acted with some ruthlessness. He had appointed as superintendent of all Hindus, a merchant of that race who had been reported to him as having been a benefactor to the factor and his companions when they were in prison : his warehouses and property, moreover, had been left intact when others were destroyed at the time of the attack. The Hindus had all ranged themselves under Albuquerque's protection in consequence. An aged Javanese whom he had placed over the Javanese community, turned out to have been the chief instigator of the plot already referred to against the lives of the Portuguese officers. He was promptly executed with the principal members of his family in the great square of the city, where the traitors were to have held their fatal banquet. The firmness and determination he showed on this occasion at once placed

Portuguese authority on a firm basis. Some Chinese junks happened to be lying in the harbour when Albuquerque made his attack on Malacca: he had treated the captains and crews with much courtesy, and had allowed them to take their cargoes on board and depart. Their report, made on their arrival in China, of the civility and chivalry of the Portuguese made a very favourable impression on the court of Pekin, so much so, indeed, that when the Sultan of Malacca appealed to China for aid against the invaders, whom he styled robbers and pirates, the only reply he received was that 'the Portuguese seemed a very good and civil nation, and the Chinese Government would not assist him'. Albuquerque finally left Malacca in January, 1512.

He reached Cochin only to receive the news that Goa had been besieged all through the winter and was in great straits. The Bijapur general, it appears, had succeeded by a stratagem in gaining a footing on the island on which Goa stands, and had demanded the surrender of the city. The man whom Albuquerque had entrusted with the command was a great captain, fully equal to a great emergency, and he was still holding the fort when the news of the desperate position of the garrison reached Albuquerque. He at once sent off a message of encouragement to the gallant defenders, which, it is recorded, was received 'with a great ringing of bells and firing of salutes'. So great indeed was his fame that, as the historian has said, 'every one already looked upon himself as redeemed from death.' He was not long in following this up in person: he had been reinforced by the arrival of a great squadron of ships commanded by one of his gallant nephews. The combined fleets set sail from Cochin in September, and soon entered the harbour of Goa. The Bijapur general shortly afterwards surrendered at discretion, and Albuquerque was left in undisputed possession of the place. He again marred a brilliant victory by his cruel treatment of certain Portuguese deserters surrendered to him by the enemy: but after all, cruelty was one of the necessary weapons of an iron age: the hands of conquerors in these times were always hands of iron, and the gloves that covered them were rarely made of velvet. Albuquerque followed up his

success at Goa by making Treaties with the principal Native powers. He had not risen to his supreme position without making many enemies, and some of these at the court of Lisbon had taken advantage of the wording of that famous dispatch, which, it has already been said, Albuquerque had sent to the Portuguese Government advocating the retention of Goa, to accuse him to the king of an intention of setting up an independent sovereignty at Goa. Their insinuations had made the king suspicious, and orders for his supersession went forth: it was several months, however, before they reached India, and Albuquerque meanwhile had time to carry out certain enterprises which he had long been contemplating.

His first expedition was directed against the Muhammadan trade route down the Red Sea, and Aden was the point selected by him for attack. He fully realized the importance of its position, as the English did many centuries after him: though he failed to capture it, he succeeded in burning many of the trading vessels he found moored in the harbour. He then explored the coasts of Arabia and Abyssinia, and seems to have made an effort to gain the aid of the Abyssinians in a contemplated attack upon Egypt, with the object of overthrowing the Muhammadan dynasty of that country. It is recorded also that he formed a wild scheme for diverting the waters of the Nile, on which the prosperity of Egypt almost entirely depends, so that they should flow through Abyssinia into the Red Sea: it was a quixotic scheme worthy of the days of romance. A still more daring plan which he is said to have formed could only have been conceived in the imagination of a Crusader, burning with righteous zeal against all things Muhammadan: this was nothing less than to carry off from its last resting-place at the holy city of Medina, the body of the great founder of the Faith of Islam. Considering the extreme difficulty that Europeans have ever had in penetrating into the most sacred city, it appears almost incredible that at one time a European should actually have ruled at Medina: and yet the correspondent of *The Times* in an account recently given of the opening of the Hedjaz Railway, has recorded that Thomas Keith,

a Scotsman, and at one time a private in the Seaforth Highlanders, was Governor of Medina in 1815. But it is not recorded that even he ever obtained a glimpse of the actual tomb of Muhammad, though of course he saw the simple mosque with its green dome that covers the tomb, and an exact replica of which is to be seen at this day in the grounds of the palace of the Nawabs of Murshidabad, who have ever taken a keen interest in the great pilgrimage. Even with the facilities now given by the new railway, it is not likely that any Europeans who may wish to see with their own eyes the sacred tomb, will be able to gratify their curiosity, and the Muhammadans, so it is said, have made it a special subject of self-gratulation that none but Ottomans have been employed on the last sections of the line where it runs into Medina. Though he was not successful in capturing Aden, the main object of Albuquerque's cruise was achieved: he obtained a knowledge of the coasts and navigation of the Red Sea which was destined to serve the Portuguese well in after years. On his voyage back to Goa, Albuquerque effected the practical ruin of the Moplah merchants of the Malabar coast by the capture of their great fleet of trading vessels, which had been detained by contrary winds in Indian waters.

Sir Alfred Lyall has said, 'The Portuguese proceeded with ruthless energy to establish their fortified settlements on the Indian coast.' This was certainly exemplified in the rough and ready methods adopted by Albuquerque to secure Portuguese predominance at Calicut. He was specially anxious to build a fort there, with the object of controlling the trade of the port, and of putting every obstacle he could in the way of the Moplah merchants at their own head quarters. Finding that he could not get the particular site he wanted, one that would completely dominate the harbour, out of the reigning Zamorin, he had no scruple in getting him removed out of the way, and he persuaded the heir-apparent to use poison to secure his own succession. The new Zamorin, as might have been expected, was more amenable to Albuquerque's wishes, and the fort was built where Albuquerque had wished it to be built. It is said to have been the best fortified

place ever constructed in India: its water-gate, by means of which reinforcements of men and arms could be introduced direct from the sea, was an especial object of admiration to the Indians. When the Raja of Vijayanagar heard of it, he is reported to have said, "Since the Zamorin of Calicut has assented to the building of a fortress in his land by the Portuguese, the Captain-General of India may as well build another in Vijayanagar, if he pleases." It is not improbable that some of the magnificent forts whose ruins are to be seen at this day in southern India, may have been modelled on Portuguese designs. While thus occupied, Albuquerque had not been neglecting his administration of affairs generally, he had been strengthening his influence with the Native powers, and had sent reinforcements to help the Governor of Malacca repel a Javanese attack upon that place. The governor proved to be a man altogether worthy of the confidence Albuquerque reposed in him, and under his firm rule Malacca remained in peace and tranquillity for many years.

It has already been shown in this sketch how greatly the political status of Portugal in the East had been strengthened by the possession of Goa: this had been exemplified in the desire of the rulers of neighbouring States to effect an alliance with such a puissant power. Among the princes who had sent their envoys to treat with Albuquerque had been the Shah of Persia. Before Albuquerque had settled himself firmly in the saddle in the new possession of the Portuguese at Goa, he had sent an envoy to treat with the Shah in 1510, but this envoy never got beyond Ormuz on his journey to the court of the Shah, having been poisoned at that place by those whose interest it was that he should not see the Shah. Albuquerque now took the opportunity of an envoy of the Shah having visited him at Goa to send an ambassador of his own back with him. All who came in contact with Albuquerque appear to have been impressed with his magnetic personality. The envoy of the Shah was no exception; it is incidentally recorded that 'he was so struck with the personal appearance of Affonso de Albuquerque, that he desired a life-size portrait of him to be

painted which could be carried to Shah Ismail'. What especially induced him to adopt this course was the news he had received from his agents that since his last visit to Ormuz a new king had arisen there who had acknowledged the suzerainty of Persia. Albuquerque had never given up his cherished design of making Portuguese influence predominant at Ormuz by the erection there of a strong fortress having for its object the control of the trade of the port. Under the new circumstances that had arisen he preferred to have the Shah as an ally than as an enemy arrayed in the field against him. At the same time he determined to strike quickly against Ormuz, in case his negotiations with the Shah failed. He sent off an expedition under the command of one of his cousins with orders to visit Aden first, to winter at Ormuz, and to thoroughly explore the Persian Gulf. His commander reported that the new King of Ormuz was entirely under the influence of a young Persian at his court. Thereupon Albuquerque determined to proceed in person to Ormuz. In 1515 he set sail from Goa with a powerful fleet of twenty-six ships. He was not destined this time to have his plans thwarted by dissensions among his own captains: they had realized that he was not a man to be trifled with. The King of Ormuz complied with his first demand that he should be allowed to complete the fortress of which the foundations had been laid some years before. But Albuquerque saw that he would make no further progress in establishing Portuguese influence until he had the young Persian removed from his commanding position at the court. With that ruthlessness that characterized the great captains of that age when obstacles stood in the way of the achievement of their plans, he had the young Persian assassinated before the very eyes of the king, who at once complied with all the wishes of his redoubtable opponent. By the middle of August, 1515, Albuquerque was in complete command of the situation at Ormuz. His fame was now at its height: he was visited at Ormuz by envoys from all the petty rulers along the Persian Gulf, and even by chiefs from the interior of Arabia, Persia, and Tartary. Many of them sent their court painters with instructions to paint a life-size portrait of the great conqueror. But

it was just at this moment that his downfall was at hand. A man may rashly conclude that he is master of his fate, but he will often be cruelly undeceived by the grim decrees of destiny, set in motion more often than not by short-sighted human agency. The Fates were jealous of the success of Albuquerque, and the decree had already gone forth against him. The curtain was just rising on that grand transformation scene in the tragic drama of his career that was to exhibit him to the gaze of the world dethroned from the position of proud pre-eminence to which his own prowess and talents had raised him.

Albuquerque was not the first nor was he destined to be the last of those great men whose eminent services to the State have been rewarded with obloquy and disgrace during their lifetime, instead of with that meed of recognition which their services merited. The great Frenchman, Dupleix, was such another, but in each case, history has reversed the verdict of their contemporaries. It was surely the irony of fate that brought it about that on their voyage from Ormuz back to Goa, the Portuguese fleet should have captured a small native vessel on which were found letters addressed to Albuquerque, giving him the news that the King of Portugal had issued orders for his supersession, and that his successor had actually reached India, with a commission to act in his place as Captain-General of Portuguese Possessions in Asia. Albuquerque was already almost sick unto death ; and the blow struck him to the heart, and was undoubtedly instrumental in hastening his end. He was within a few miles of Goa only when he died, on December 16th, 1515. It was his body only that crossed the bar into the harbour of Goa, the indomitable spirit had flown elsewhere. The news of his death was received in Goa with the most profound grief. In the picturesque imagery of the East, the chronicler has said that 'so great was the crying and weeping on all sides, that it seemed as if the very river of Goa was being poured out'. The Hindus, with that belief in the transmigration of souls that is of the essence of their Faith, are reported to have said that 'it could not be that he was dead, but that God had need of him for some

war, and had therefore sent for him'. Just before his death, Albuquerque had added a codicil to his will, and had written a touching letter to the king in which he dealt proudly on his great services to Portugal, and begged the king to advance the interests of his son. It is satisfactory to record that the king complied with this, the last dying request of his great servant, and that the young man proved a worthy son of a great father; he became eventually President of the Senate of Lisbon, and was the author of the commentaries from which the bulk of the materials for the life of Albuquerque have been drawn. The king is further said to have been filled with remorse at having allowed his judgement to be influenced by the machinations of the enemies of Albuquerque. He strove to make reparation by issuing a rescript giving Albuquerque the highest office at his disposal, supreme command of Indian and Arabian Seas, with full authority to draw on all the resources of India in his campaigns; but, though he knew it not at the time, his great captain had passed away before the commission had even received the signature of the king. It is recorded that Ferdinand of Spain in conversation one day with the Portuguese ambassador, expressed his astonishment that King Emmanuel of Portugal should have ordered the return of Affonso de Albuquerque from India, seeing he was so great a captain and so fortunate in his wars.

A very pleasing portrait of Albuquerque has been left by his son, but space will not allow of its reproduction here; he brings out especially those traits in his character that appealed peculiarly to Orientals, his strict veracity, his integrity, and his charitableness; he was feared and at the same time loved. His reputation for just administration was so great that it is recorded, that whenever the Hindus and Muhammadans of India had any cause of grievance against their governors, they used to resort to his tomb at Goa, and make offerings of choice flowers and of rich oil for the lamp that was ever kept burning, to propitiate him and secure his aid in obtaining justice for them. The Brahmans, as might have been expected from that intolerant sect, had no great love for the Portuguese, but they recognized their high qualities. Mr. Morse

Stephens quotes the authority of Dr. Burnell on the existence of an ancient Sanskrit poem pointing to this recognition. This poem, the title of which, by interpretation, is 'A Treatise on the Characteristics of the Universe', was composed by a Brahman of Conjeveram, named Venkatascharyya. In it the author calls the Portuguese Huna, and thus speaks of them : 'These men are very despicable, are devoid of tenderness and do not value Brahmans a straw ; they have endless faults, and do not observe ceremonial purity, but they are to be praised for their self-restraint and truthfulness, their mechanical skill and respect for law.' The eulogy contained in this passage may be considered to outweigh the abuse, as it is easy to see that much of this is due to the Portuguese having denied to the Brahmans any special sanctity or divinity. Mr. Morse Stephens well says : 'Had the Brahman poet known Albuquerque or the greatest of his successors, he would have praised also their valour, their tenacity, and their disinterested unselfishness. But striking is the contrast between Albuquerque and even the greatest of his successors.' His contemporaries realized the intrinsic greatness of the man, and his son has voiced their general opinion.

The spirit of the great Portuguese conqueror still dwells in the hearts of his countrymen, as does that of the great Frenchman of a later age. Mr. Morse Stephens has stated that in his dedication of the second edition of the Commentaries to King Sebastian of Portugal in 1574, the son of Albuquerque has related an incident that illustrates the influence that Albuquerque's great example had in stirring the minds and imaginations of men. The time was that period in the history of Portugal when her dominion in the East was declining to its fall. The Commentator thus writes : 'I shall say no more than tell you what a soldier said, who always accompanied him in war. This man being very old, and staying in the city of Goa, when he reflected upon the disorder of Indian affairs, went with a stick in his hand to the chapel of Affonso de Albuquerque, and striking the sepulchre wherein he was lying buried, cried out, "Oh ! great Captain, thou hast done me all the harm thou couldest have done, but I cannot deny

that thou hast been the greatest conqueror and sufferer of troubles that the world has known: arise thou! for what thou hast gained is like to be lost."' With this striking testimony to the personality of a man, who, though he cannot be styled Affonso the Good, can at any rate be styled Affonso the Great, this sketch may be fittingly concluded.

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